

THE MAIN ACTORS OF CIVILIAN OVERSIGHT AS A MECHANISM FOR ENSURING NATIONAL SECURITY

ANAHIT SHAHUMYAN

National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia
International Scientific-Educational Center
Chief Specialist of General Department
PhD student at the Institute of Philosophy,
Sociology and Law of NAS RA
anahit.shahumyan@isec.am

DOI: 10.54503/2579-2903-2025.1-156

Abstract

The increase in the political significance of civilian oversight and non-governmental organizations in the life of modern states is conditioned, in particular, by the expansion of the possibility of applying the liberal model to states through international universal treaties. It reduces the state's public (especially social) responsibility, organizational and management functions, transferring them to non-state, especially public organizations, which carry out the function of protecting human rights.

In modern security processes, the greatest political (geopolitical) significance is attributed to those civilian oversight structures that are financed by international organizations and Western (particularly American and European) funds. The activities of the majority of them, within the framework of human rights protection, are also directed to ensuring the national security of states and normal life.

In the structure of the system of ensuring national security of the Republic of Armenia, non-governmental bodies, among which civil society (in particular, non-governmental organizations), including the media, can be distinguished, have their own place and role. Such participation in the system of ensuring national security speaks of the existence of an established democratic system. They are the supporting entities that force the government to take into account the diverse demands and interests of different groups of society when implementing state policy, influencing decision-making in the security sector.

Conducting systematic and consistent monitoring is also of great importance for overseeing the RA national security system, as well as ensuring the implementation of national security policy. Monitoring of the sphere of ensuring national security is the systematic collection and analysis of information on phenomena and processes (specific issues, programs) related to national security and policies aimed at ensuring it. Effective monitoring is necessary for the purpose of assessing processes taking place in areas of strategic importance for the state, predicting future developments, and making necessary decisions. As a result, this monitoring contributes to improving the policies implemented in these sectors

and increasing the efficiency of management.

Monitoring the national security structures and implemented policies of the Republic of Armenia, which is mainly coordinated by the Office of the Security Council, is of essential importance for strengthening the country's security, coordinating the activities of state government bodies, developing and effectively implementing strategic programs, as well as cooperating with other states on issues related to national security. The analytical and information base formed as a result of the monitoring, serves as a basis for both decision-making on national security and the assessment, review, and further development of the RA national security policy and the programs stemming from it.

Keywords: national security, civil society, well-being, knowledge, civilian, state.

ՔԱՂԱՔԱՅԻԱԿԱՆ ՎԵՐԱՀՍԿՈՂՈՒԹՅԱՆ ՀԻՄՆԱԿԱՆ ԴԵՐԱԿԱՏԱՐՆԵՐԸ ՈՐՊԵՍ ԱԶԳԱՅԻՆ ԱՆՎՏԱՆԳՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԱՊԱՀՈՎՄԱՆ ՄԵԽԱՆԻԶՄ

ԱՆԱՀԻՏ ՇԱՀՈՒՄՅԱՆ

ՀՀ ԳԱԱ գիտակրթական միջազգային կենտրոնի
ընդհանուր բաժնի գլխավոր մասնագետ,
ՀՀ ԳԱԱ փիլիսոփայության, սոցիոլոգիայի
և իրավունքի ինստիտուտի հայցորդ
anahit.shahumyan@isec.am

Համառոտագիր

Ժամանակակից պետությունների կյանքում քաղաքացիական վերահսկողության և հասարակական կազմակերպությունների քաղաքական նշանակության մեծացումը պայմանավորված է հատկապես միջազգային ունիվերսալ պայմանագրերով պետությունների ազատականության մոդելի կիրառման հնարավորության ընդլայնմամբ: Այն նվազեցնում է պետության հասարակական (հատկապես՝ սոցիալական) պատասխանատվությունը, կազմակերպման-կառավարման գործառույթները՝ դրանք փոխանցելով ոչ պետական, հատկապես հասարակական կազմակերպություններին, որոնք իրականացնում են մարդու իրավունքների պաշտպանության գործառույթ:

Անվտանգային արդի գործընթացներում առավել մեծ քաղաքական (աշխարհաքաղաքական) նշանակություն ունեն քաղաքացիական վերահսկողության այն կառուցակարգերը, որոնք ֆինանսավորվում են միջազգային կազմակերպությունների, արևմտյան (մասնավորապես՝ ամերիկյան և եվրոպական) ֆոնդերի կողմից: Դրանց գերակշիռ մասի գործունեությունը մարդու իրավունքների պաշտպանության շրջանակներում ուղղվում է նաև պետությունների ազգային անվտանգության երաշխավորմանը և բնականոն կենսագործունեության ապահովմանը:

Հայաստանի Հանրապետության անվտանգության ապահովման համակարգի կառուցվածքում իրենց ուրույն տեղն ու դերն ունեն ոչ պետական կառույցները, որոնցից կարելի է առանձնացնել քաղաքացիական հասարակությունը (մասնավորապես՝ հասարակական կազմակերպությունները), այդ թվում՝ ԶԼՄ-ները: Ազգային անվտանգության ապահովման համակարգում նմանատիպ մասնակցությունը խոսում է կայացած ժողովրդավարական համակարգի առկայության մասին: Դրանք այն օժանդակող սուբյեկտներն են, որոնք ստիպում են իշխանությանը պետական քաղաքականություն իրականացնելիս հաշվի առնել հասարակության տարբեր խմբերի բազմաբնույթ պահանջներն ու շահերը՝ ազդելով անվտանգության ոլորտի վերաբերյալ որոշումների ընդունման վրա:

ՀՀ ազգային անվտանգության ապահովման համակարգի վերահսկման, ինչպես նաև ազգային անվտանգության քաղաքականության կենսագործումն ապահովելու համար կարևոր նշանակություն ունի նաև համակարգված և հետևողական դիտարկումների անցկացումը: Ազգային անվտանգության ապահովման բնագավառի դիտարկումն ազգային անվտանգությանն ու դրա ապահովմանն ուղղված քաղաքականությանն առնչվող երևույթների, գործընթացների (կոնկրետ հիմնախնդրի, ծրագրի) վերաբերյալ համակարգված տեղեկատվության հավաքագրումն ու վերլուծությունն է: Արդյունավետ դիտարկումն անհրաժեշտ է պետության համար ռազմավարական նշանակության ոլորտներում տեղի ունեցող գործընթացների գնահատման, հետագա ընթացքի կանխատեսման և անհրաժեշտ որոշումների կայացման նպատակի իրականացման համար: Արդյունքում այդ դիտարկումը նպաստում է տվյալ ոլորտներում իրականացվող քաղաքականության բաելավմանը և կառավարման արդյունավետության բարձրացմանը:

Երկրի անվտանգության ամրապնդման, պետական կառավարման մարմինների գործունեության համակարգման, ռազմավարական ծրագրերի մշակման և արդյունավետ իրականացման, ինչպես նաև այլ պետությունների հետ ազգային անվտանգությանն առնչվող հարցերով համագործակցության համար էական նշանակություն ունի ՀՀ ազգային անվտանգության կառուցակարգերի և իրականացվող քաղաքականության դիտարկումը, որը հիմնականում համակարգվում է Անվտանգության խորհրդի գրասենյակի կողմից: Դիտարկման արդյունքներով ձևավորված վերլուծական-տեղեկատվական բազան հիմք է հանդիսանում ինչպես ազգային անվտանգության վերաբերյալ որոշումների կայացման, այնպես էլ ՀՀ ազգային անվտանգության քաղաքականության և դրանից բխող ծրագրերի գնահատման, վերանայման և հետագա զարգացման համար:

Բանալի բառեր՝ ազգային անվտանգություն, քաղաքացիական հասարակություն, բարեկեցություն, գիտելիք, քաղաքացիական անձ, պետություն:

Introduction

In modern political science, a special place and role is given to the study of the activities of civil society and subjects of civil control. In particular, modern scientists study the activities of the main subjects of civil control aimed at protecting national security mechanisms. In addition, in this process, an important

role is assigned to identifying the features of the idea of civil society. However, the concept of civilian oversight is often misunderstood. In this regard, it is necessary to clarify the nature of civil society and its impact on national security structures.

Research methods

Based on the characteristics of the research and the scope of the problems scrutinized in it, both general and special methods, such as analysis, synthesis, deduction, induction, comparative-legal method, etc.

Theoretical-methodological bases

Public oversight of national security is of great importance for the establishment and development of a modern democratic state, as it ensures transparency, accountability, and protection of citizens' rights in the security sector.

National security refers to the protection of a nation's stability and well-being from various threats, including military, economic, social, and environmental factors that can significantly impact the quality of life and choices available to the government and its people (Whyte, 2001, pp. 4663–4667).

As for the well-being of society, many current States consider ensuring the well-being of the members of this society to be also an essential component of national security (Gevorgyan S.R, et al.,2024)

For instance, the Government of the Republic of Armenia has envisaged in its national strategy the provision of equal opportunities and social and economic inclusion for various social groups, including dignified aging, equality between women and men, and the prevention of violence, as well as the effective protection of the rights of persons with disabilities and children (National Security Strategy Of The Republic Of Armenia, 2020, p.33).

It is obvious, that the breadth of threats to democratic country national security requires that the government attract, recruit, and retain a workforce equipped with the specific knowledge, skills, and behaviors necessary to meet the challenge of protecting the country and its interests (Valla, 2022). Therefore, in this case, the government engages with civil society and its representatives.

According to the universally recognized definition, civil society is a relatively independent and self-organizing system of social, economic and political relations that includes various forms of associations of people in order to meet their own material and spiritual needs (Milyan & Kazanchian, 2023; Kazanchian, 2021).

Civil society is, first of all, a structured society, which, through appropriate structures, is capable not only of self-governance, but also of effective control in those areas that remain within the scope of state functions. As a result, the scope of state functions is self-limited, and at the same time, due to civil society control, the effectiveness of state functions in other areas increases (Edwards, 2014, p.45–46).

Second, the structure of modern civil society can be represented in the form of five main systems reflecting the corresponding spheres of its life. These

are social (in the narrow sense of the word), economic, political, spiritual-cultural and information systems (Poleshchuk, 2011).

It is well known that, a strong civil society contributes to national security by ensuring democratic oversight, transparency, and accountability. Moreover, an active civil society can help prevent social conflicts and increase trust between the state and the society.

The conducted research shows, that civil society ensures citizen participation in decision-making processes, which contributes to better governance and greater stability. Moreover, civil society is fully revealed in a democratic state governed by the rule of law. In such a state, power and civil society complement each other, rather than oppose each other. Civil society influences the state through democratic institutions, for example, by adopting laws on the protection of human rights, on the openness and responsibility of officials.

As for the authoritarian regime of government, it is a kind of compromise between totalitarian and democratic political regimes. It is softer, more liberal than totalitarianism, but harsher, more anti-people than democratic. In these conditions, civil society can exist, but it depends on the state (Lewis, 2013). In other words, in authoritarian states, an active civil society can be perceived as a threat, leading to repression and restrictions on rights and freedoms.

The conducted research indicates, that in the name of national security and sovereignty, civil society organizations (CSOs) have been confronted with a tightening of legal regulations and scrutiny across various political regimes and find it increasingly difficult to obtain funding and public support, a global trend which has become known as a shrinking or closing space for civil society.

Some scholars, such as G. Chimiak, S. Toepler, A. Zimmer, K. Fröhlich, examining authoritarian policies and their impact on civil society, point out in their works that the approaches of authoritarian governments are not uniform, but rather represent a combination of measures that limit the space for politically active CSOs, while at the same time offering opportunities for service-providing and state-supportive CSOs to expand their activities.

According to the authors, in this case current selective mechanism has repercussions for the relationship between the more expressive civil society and the more service oriented nonprofit sector. While nonprofits get to be more involved in social service delivery and contracting, the advocacy function of civil society has increasingly been marginalized (Chimiak, Kravchenko, & Pape, 2024).

Based on the above, we believe that, it is important to find a balance between developing civil society and ensuring national security in order to avoid conflict and ensure stability not only in democratic but also in authoritarian state. Various national security strategies and concepts emphasize the importance of civil society in the context of security and sustainable development.

The aforementioned approaches emphasize the importance of mutual co-operation between civil society and national security, as well as the need for their harmonious coexistence.

Establishing civilian control does not mean giving civilians full authority over

all security matters. Instead, it implies the establishment of a system of checks and balances, safeguards, and oversight to ensure the accountability of the security sector. This system should ensure that the security sector serves the interests of both the state and communities and is effective in combating emerging threats.

Even with a well-managed security management system, the security sector must maintain a certain degree of autonomy in internal operational matters. This autonomy promotes specialization of the field and prevents it from being subservient to political interests. Ideally, the management and control of the security sector should be carried out with shared responsibility.

In general, civilian leadership can set general goals, policies, and policy priorities, such as identifying primary threats. However, the security sector itself decides how to organize its internal operations to implement those goals, within the framework of the law. Civilian leadership, except in emergencies, should not directly manage security operations.

An important starting point for discussions is to clarify the mandates, powers and roles of actors involved in civilian oversight. Civilian actors should be entrusted with key policy and legal design functions. In our opinion, consultations with the security sector may be included in these processes, but final decision making should remain under the jurisdiction of executive branch and parliament. For example, in various countries, laws stipulate that only parliament can approve the deployment of troops abroad. Similarly, only the executive branch has the authority to declare a national emergency situation and authorize the involvement of the armed forces in internal security matters.

Security sector oversight is organized to assess the extent to which the armed forces are applying the established rules and implementing government policies. However, this does not mean that civilian authorities should interfere in the implementation processes of operations. The power imbalance and leverage differences between civilian and security actors make it difficult to impose mandatory civilian oversight through laws or directives. The constitution and legislative framework provide an important basis for civilian oversight. However, a well-designed legislative framework alone, without adequate capacity and access in practice, does not guarantee sufficient impact. The example of neighboring Turkey shows that the power of oversight is often fully implemented years after the transition process (Kutay, 2017). During this time, civic engagement can also be promoted through simpler steps.

The importance of security sector management knowledge is crucial in this context. In this case, it is important that civilian actors acquire the necessary knowledge on key security issues. If civilian actors have sufficient knowledge, they will be able to have a more influential impact on national security policy. The lack of the necessary knowledge can lead to inappropriate proposals or policies, which can reduce the reputation of civilian actors. For example, parliamentary oversight programs in the Balkans initially focused on building general knowledge about security sector governance, then on developing parliamentarians' ability to ask the right questions (Lilyanova & Blagojevic, 2017, p. 4).

Thus, for civilian oversight to be successful, a balanced approach, a legal basis, and the development of professional knowledge are necessary.

Civilian actors have a comparative advantage due to their access to a wide range of information and analysis that is often unavailable to security institutions. In this regard, civilian actors can make a valuable contribution by providing critical information and analysis that the security sector needs to make informed decisions about political priorities, actions, and reforms.

Obviously, knowledge and information can become important tools for civilian oversight, but civic actors must prioritize data collection and analysis. Conducting research, needs assessments, or organizing consultative processes with communities can be starting points through which citizens can demonstrate the depth of their knowledge by engaging in the security policy-making process.

In addition, the media plays an important role in ensuring the dissemination of key information and promoting national political debate on security issues. The investigative work of the media can become an important tool for security sector oversight. However, it is important that this information is based on facts, well researched and analyzed.

Civilian actors can gradually gain greater influence by supporting the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the security sector, rather than by consistently adopting punitive or controlling approaches.

This support can be expressed in the following ways:

- providing appropriate and sufficient budgetary resources,
- developing effective legislation,
- making constructive proposals for reforms that take into account the interests of both communities and the security sector.

Collaborative and constructive partnership between civilian and security agencies are often key to building trust and effective oversight. Even in contexts where political and institutional barriers limit the access and impact of civilian oversight, sustained and persistent work can yield important results. Civilian actors presenting a coordinated and coherent perspective can contribute to national policy debates and formation, directly or indirectly influencing the security sector. In countries where civilian actors have had an influential voice, there have often been multiple civilian actors working towards complementary goals.

The coherence of oversight and influence is particularly important, as polarization of views or disorganized approaches can undermine the effectiveness of civilian oversight. For example, in Nigeria (Chukwudi & Ojo, 2023) and Serbia in the initial stages of the transition processes, civil society organizations and political parties created joint platforms to exchange information and develop common recommendations. However, another important consideration is to build an oversight system without focusing on a single actor.

Effective security management systems typically involve a variety of civilian actors that exercise oversight or have key management functions. Each actor has its own unique characteristics, and only a collective and coordinated approach can ensure effective civilian oversight.

The components of the civilian oversight system include:

- Executive branch: Office of the President, Prime Minister (according to the governance model), Ministries of Defense and Interior, Ministry of Finance,
- Judicial system: prosecutor's office, courts
- State oversight bodies: parliament, human rights defender, anti-corruption commission,
- Non-state actors: civil society, media, academy, community organizations.

The executive branch (president/prime minister, cabinet, etc.) is often the most active and direct actor in overseeing and managing the security sector. In many countries, the head of government has the authority of commander-in-chief of the armed forces to coordinate security sector activities at the strategic level, leaving tactical decision-making to the heads of security agencies.

The ministries of defense and interior typically play important roles in policy making, resource management, and administrative mediation. For example in Poland (Górska-Łazarz, 2021, pp. 5–8), Slovakia (Defense Strategy Of The Slovak Republic, 2021) and Czech Republic (The Defense Strategy of the Czech Republic, 2021) the position of Minister of Defense is entrusted to civilians to ensure the separation of military and political functions.

The conducted research shows, that Parliament has an important role in ensuring accountability in the security sector. Through its legislative and oversight functions, parliament can ensure good regulation, resource allocation, and independent assessment of the security sector. Nevertheless, equally important is the role of the civil society. As mentioned above, in the political life of modern societies, the general interests and needs of citizens are not realized only through state power institutions or political parties. In order to achieve vital goals and exercise rights and freedoms, people often unite their efforts, creating non-governmental organizations that can represent and protect the collective interests of separate groups. In this matter, various self-governing associations of citizens play a huge role: non-governmental organizations, associations, charitable associations, religious groups, trade unions, etc. They are a condition for socio-political processes and an indicator of the development of civil society.

In professional literature and in world practice, a distinction is made between the concepts of “non-profit public organization” and “non-governmental organization”. Often, all structures of the political system are likened and perceived as public organizations, which can be explained by their larger number in the row of non-governmental organizations, by their more prominent activities, and their wider recognition in society.

The current legislation of the Republic of Armenia defines a public organization as a public association of citizens of the Republic of Armenia, citizens of foreign countries, stateless persons and (or) legal entities, which has the status of a non-commercial organization.

As of by December 31, 2024, there were 6,907 state-registered non-governmental organizations operating in the Republic of Armenia. It is noteworthy that their number has shown tendency of increasing especially over the last 5

years, for example, in 2019, 2,113 organizations were registered (Annual Report, 2024).

At the same time, it is important to pay attention to the fact that civil society's participation in the aforementioned oversight processes is implemented not only through organizations acting in the legal form of a "public organization". In this regard, we believe it is necessary to identify the legal possibilities for the public manifestation of a person, a participant of political science entity civil society.

A person can exercise the primary opportunity without becoming a member or joining any organization. The latter has been provided with a similar opportunity at the constitutional level. For example, the rights guaranteed by the constitution to express an opinion, demonstrate will, and present a position enable citizens to exercise their rights as a unit of society, including oversight opportunities.

However, it should be noted that the effectiveness of public participation increases even more when individuals act through associations. It is in this regard that it is important to reveal the legal nature of associations of individuals. Associations of individuals, depending on the type of public relations, are more objectively disclosed in civil law

Thus, participation in relevant public relations is carried out through non-commercial legal entities. Legal entities considered to be non-commercial organizations can be created in the form of public associations, foundations or in other forms provided for by law. The above-mentioned public organizations are classified as a type of public association non-commercial legal entity. It is noteworthy that the legislator does not limit the purpose of the activities of non-commercial organizations. In other words, they can pursue any legitimate goal unrelated to entrepreneurial activity: social, charitable, cultural, scientific, and other goals. Therefore, not only non-commercial legal entities that are public organizations have the right to act as representatives of civil society, but also other public associations, foundations or in other forms provided for by law. Therefore, limiting organizational participation in this area only to the format of public organizations is not fair.

We believe that the problem arises from international practice where representatives of this sector are described as "NGO", which is a broader concept than a public organization in its content.

Summing up the above, it should be noted that the term "NGO" (non-governmental organization), includes, according to domestic legislation, public associations, foundations and non-profit organizations established in other forms provided for by law (The Law Of The Republic Of Armenia On Public Organizations).

No less important is the participation of civil society representatives in public relations without forming a legal entity, simply through a group of individuals gathered around a goal. Such are public movements, target groups of individuals, etc.

Results

It is known, that civil society can play a key role in policy making and in identifying accountability gaps, through public opinion. For example, in Eastern Europe, civil society has played a leading role in anti-corruption reforms. In contrast, in the United States, civil society is actively involved in national security issues through various non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that focus on human rights, monitor government actions, and ensure transparency. According to U.S. Department of States, NGOs in the United States undertake a wide array of activities, including political advocacy on issues such as foreign policy, elections, the environment, healthcare, women's rights, economic development, and many other issues. They often develop and address new approaches to social and economic problems that governments cannot address alone (Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in the United States, 2025). For example, organizations such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International play an important role in drawing attention to human rights violations and ensuring accountability.

In Germany, civil society is actively involved in the security debate, especially in the context of migration policy and human rights. NGOs and activists play an important role in protecting the rights of refugees and ensuring compliance with international standards. Civil society in South Korea is actively involved in security issues, especially in the context of relations with North Korea. NGOs and activists work on peace and disarmament issues and participate in dialogue between the two countries.

In India, civil society plays an important role in security issues, especially in the context of human rights and the fight against terrorism. Civil society organizations are actively working to protect the rights of minorities and ensure justice. In Canada, civil society is actively involved in national security issues, including human rights, migration, and integration. NGOs play an important role in monitoring government actions and ensuring respect for human rights (Purewal, Smit, & Nicole, 2024).

In Brazil, civil society is actively involved in security issues, especially in the context of the fight against violence and crime. Civil society organizations work towards protecting human rights and ensuring the security of vulnerable groups (Leeds, 2013).

These examples demonstrate how civil society can influence national security by ensuring the protection of human rights, promoting transparency and accountability, and engaging in public debate on important issues. International studies, even in the most developed and established contexts, show that the degree to which armed forces recognize or adhere to civilian oversight and management is often conditioned by the professional, capable, and honest approach of civilian oversight. If civilian actors fail to provide effective governance and add value to policymaking, but instead attempt to instrumentalize, mislead, or politicize the security sector, it is difficult to build the trust necessary to establish a culture and practice of civilian oversight.

Moreover, there is a risk that the transition process will lead to a cornerstone

error, from one extreme of “militarization of politics” to the other of “politicization of the security sector”.

To create an effective and professional security sector, it is necessary to:

1. Limit the military’s involvement in political processes. For example, Indonesia, during its transition period, has used legislative measures to limit the possibility of uniformed personnel to participate in politics, allowing only retired personnel to participate in elections.

2. Limit unnecessary political interference in decisions that should remain the responsibility of the military. For example, in Kenya, Nigeria, and Gambia, legislative provisions have been enacted that executive orders to the military must always be in writing, to ensure transparency in relations between the military and politicians.

In many countries, the Constitution limits the executive branch’s appointment powers to only the highest positions in the armed forces.

Transition processes in Liberia and Zambia have shown that politicization of the security sector can lead to serious consequences if the president is given unnecessary powers to appoint individuals at various levels.

In Turkey, politicians, especially the president, actively interfere in the affairs of the armed forces. After the 2016 coup attempt, there were mass dismissals and arrests of military personnel, which led to a significant politicization of the army. In Venezuela, the military is under the control of President Nicolás Maduro, who uses the army to suppress the opposition and consolidate his power. Politicians are actively involved in the management of military structures. Such interference can undermine the integrity, professionalism, and neutrality of security organizations. In Egypt, the military has traditionally played an important role in the country’s politics. Since the overthrow of President Mohamed Morsi in 2013, the army has become a key player in political life. Politicians often turn to the military to support their decisions (Marshall, 2015, p. 3).

Managing the risks of politicization of the security sector requires clear legal mechanisms and constraints to ensure both the neutrality of the armed forces and the effectiveness of civilian oversight.

One of the main objectives of the transition and security sector reform processes is to establish civilian oversight and control over the security sector, in order to contribute to the development of an effective, efficient and accountable security sector. The idea that citizens play a key oversight role in the security sector, participate in key security policy decisions, manage key national budgetary issues and regulate security sector mandates, structures and powers is a fundamental international principle of security sector governance.

However, despite the general international principles and normative standards of civilian oversight, the processes of establishing civilian oversight of the security sector, and in particular, the armed forces, are never identical, and different models and approaches may be considered to achieve the goal.

International experience has shown that this complex process requires a step-by-step (sometimes decades-long) and comprehensive approach to achieve

real results in establishing civilian oversight and improving security sector governance. The level of progress in establishing civilian oversight is likely to remain a reflection of, or a prerequisite for, the overall success of the transition process, and it is therefore necessary to maintain focus on this priority area throughout the transition process.

Conclusion

Summing up the results of the issue, we conclude, that for the broad masses of society, civilian oversight is an important prerequisite for democratic governance. However, in addition, it is also an important prerequisite for the effective use of budgetary funds, ensuring public order, protection and assistance in emergency situations, as well as a guarantee of the protection of human rights: both in law enforcement agencies and in society in general. The above, in turn, contributes to the preservation and promotion of democratic values and the general democratic governance model, which, despite criticism, is a justifiable option.

Civil society plays an important role in strengthening and developing democratic institutions, ensuring the connection between society and the state, protecting the interests of citizens, and contributing to fair and effective governance. Therefore, civil society should participate in law-making activities by proposing legislative reforms that make public administration more open and responsive to the needs of society. In addition, studying the essence of civil-military relations in democratic conditions, we can confirm that civilian oversight over the armed forces is a complex mechanism of management (supervision), which is carried out by the people, both through state institutions and through their own informal independent associations. It is aimed at ensuring that the state and use of the armed forces correspond to the needs and interests of society.

References

1. Annual Report. (2024). *The State Register of Legal Entities of the Ministry of Justice of RA*.
2. Chimiak, G., Kravchenko, Z., & Pape, U. (2024). Civil Society and the Spread of Authoritarianism: Institutional Pressures and CSO Responses. *Voluntas*, Volume 35, 221–225. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11266-024-00641-y>
3. Chukwudi, C. E., & Ojo, S. S. (2023). Civil Society Organisations and Sustenance of Democratization in Nigeria. *African Journal of Politics and Administrative Studies (AJPAS)*, Volume 16(1), 18–33.
4. Defense Strategy Of The Slovak Republic. (2021). Bratislava. URL: <https://goo.su/UVfa> (accessed at 12.01.2025)
5. Edwards, M. (2014). *Civil Society* (3rd. ed.). Cambridge.: Polity pub.
6. Gevorgyan, S., Hakobyan, N. R., Kazanchian, L. A., & Khachatryan, A. G. (2024). Counseling Psychology and Psychotherapy. Study of Well-Being and Assertivness Variables Among Young People, Volume 3(no.3), 116–118. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17759/cpp.2024320307> (accessed at 12.01.2025)
7. Górska-Lazarz , K. (2021). Defense Strategy Of The Republic Of Poland. Sector strategy of the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland. Warsaw.
8. Kazanchian, L. (2021). Features of Interaction Between The State and Civil Society in the Context of the Philosophy of Law. *WISDOM*, 114–119. DOI:<https://doi.org/10.24234/>

- wisdom.v18i2.532/(accessed 05.01.2025).
9. Kutay, A. (2017). From Guardianship to Civilian Control: How did the Turkish Military get here? *Outlines of Global Transformations: Politics, Economics, Law*, 10(3), 68–82.
 10. Leeds, E. (2013). *Civil Society and Citizen Security in Brazil: A Fragile but Evolving Relationship*. Washington.
 11. Lewis, D. (2013). Civil Society and the Authoritarian State: Cooperation, Contestation and Discourse. *Journal of Civil Society*, Volume 9(Issue 3), 325–340.
 12. Lilyanova, V., & Blagojevic, J. (2017). *Western Balkans: Parliamentary Oversight of the Security Sector*. Strasburg: European Parliament Pub.
 13. Marshal, S. (2015). *The Egyptian Armed Forces And The Remaking Of An Economic Empire*. Washington: Carnegie Middle East Center pub.
 14. Milyan, G., & Kazanchian, L. (2023). Characteristics Of Mutual Responsibility And Obligations Between The State And The Individual In A Legal Democratic State. *Katchar Scientific Periodical*, 2, 58–69. DOI: 10.54503/2579–2903–2023.2–58
 15. National Security Strategy Of The Republic Of Armenia. A resilient Armenia in a changing world. (2020). Yerevan. URL: <https://goo.su/hpgiAm> (accessed 05.01.2025)
 16. Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in the United States. (January 2025). Fact Sheet of the U.S. Department of States, 2–4. URL: <https://goo.su/WBro> (accessed 15.01.2025)
 17. Poleshchuk, A. S. (2011). To The Issue About Subjects Of Public (Civil) Control And Its System In Russia Federation. *Bulletin of the Moscow University of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia*, Volume 6, pp. 122–127 (In Russian)
 18. Purewal, S., Smit, J., & Nicole, A.-M. (2024). The role of civil society organizations (CSOs) as community-based knowledge brokers: A qualitative study with CSOs during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic in Canada. *Qualitative Health Communication*, Volume 3(Issue 2), 3–24.
 19. The Defense Strategy of the Czech Republic. (2021). URL: <https://goo.su/oFGEM6W> (accessed 05.01.2025)
 20. The Law Of The Republic Of Armenia “On Public Organizations” (adapted on 16.12.2016). URL: <https://cis-legislation.com/document.fwx?rgn=105568> (accessed 05.01.2025)
 21. Valla, L. G. (2022). Citizens’ Perceptions of Security Issues: New and Old Actors in the National Security Framework. *Journal of Human Security*, Volume 18(Issue 1), 18–28. DOI:10.12924/johs2022.18010018 (accessed 05.01.2025)
 22. Whyte, A. V. (2001). *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*. Amsterdam: Elsevier pub.

The article has been submitted for publication: 27.01.2025

Հոդվածը ներկայացվել է տպագրության. 27.01.2025

The article is sent for review: 14.02.2025

Հոդվածն ուղարկվել է գրախոսության. 14.02.2025

The article is accepted for publication: 31.03.2025

Հոդվածն ընդունվել է տպագրության. 31.03.2025