The Minister for Defence Mikael Odenberg (right-wing politician) chose to leave his position the 5th September in 2007.

90. Ibid.
93. Claes Wallenius, Aida Alvinius, Maria Fors, Peder Hyllengren, Emma Jonsson, Johan Österberg and Gerry Larsson, 2011.
95. Gwyn Harries-Jenkins, 1990, 121.
97. Ibid.

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the current state of affairs regarding the perceived threats to military professionalism in Switzerland and the Netherlands are discussed. It shall offer insights on possible differences and similarities in the perceived threats to military professionalism in two countries that share a comparable culture, are similar in size and economic development, but differ in their military missions as well as the degree of professionalization within their armed forces. Switzerland, for example, still has a conscript army, whereas the Dutch forces transformed into a professional army in 1996. First, we describe the historical background of both armed forces focusing on two major global changes affecting European armies over the last 30 years (i.e., the end of the Cold War as signified by the fall of the Berlin Wall and the 9/11 attacks on the United States. Second, the concept of military professionalism and what it encompasses will be examined using the approach established by Don Snider and Gayle Watkins and another by Thomas-Durell Young. Third, to have the appropriate framework to understand the possible threats described by Snider and Watkins, we categorized it using the five factors of the Dynamic Five-Factor Model of Leadership developed by Psychologists Stefan Seiler and Andres Pfister. We do not attempt to analyze all possible threats to military professionalism but instead, focus on threats already described in the literature and on threats confronted by both countries. While describing and categorizing the threats, data from two small surveys conducted in both armed forces is presented. Finally, conclusions

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The views expressed in this chapter represent those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Swiss or the Royal Netherlands Armed Forces.
are drawn from these interpretations and the commonalities and differences are discussed between the Dutch (professional) armed forces who deploy to combat zones, and the Swiss (conscript) armed forces, which deploys only to post-conflict areas in peace support operations.

**HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF TWO EUROPEAN MILITARY ORGANIZATIONS**

Events taking place in the world have a major influence on defence organizations. After all, these organizations serve society and operate globally. Two events that had a major impact on defence organizations around the world were the fall of the Berlin Wall (1989), which led to the end of the Cold War, and the 9/11 attacks in the United States. These events led to a shift in the focus of military operations in terms of prioritizing terrorist activities. Events like these have changed the habitus of "The Enemy". Conflicts appear to have changed from symmetric to asymmetric, meaning belligerents differ significantly in relative military power, strategy or tactics and exploit each other's weaknesses in order to complete their mission. This is expressed in terrorist attacks and guerrilla tactics.

At the end of the Cold War, the Swiss Army Forces had to deal with political and social movements that wanted to abolish the army as a whole. The perceived utility of the armed forces was publicly questioned. The Group for a Switzerland without an Army (GSoA) launched an initiative during the Cold War that was brought to a vote in November 1989. Of the voting population, 35.6 percent wanted a Switzerland without an army. This marked a major turning point for the Swiss Armed Forces, as its goals, size, budget, etc., were widely questioned for the first time. Since then, several political initiatives and referenda which explicitly focused on the armed forces, were cast to a vote.

As a consequence, the Swiss Armed Forces was subjected to two major reorganizations and a massive reduction in size. In the 1980s, there were over 800,000 militia and in 2010 approximately 190,000 remained. Further reductions to around 100,000 are planned in the next few years. Contrary to the reduction of the militia forces, the number of professional officers has doubled in the first years after the millennium. Currently, about 3,750 professional officers form the core of the armed forces. The annual military budget has remained below 10 billion since the end of the Cold War, however, military spending represented 35 percent of the over all federal budget in 1960. Today, it is around 7 percent.4

While reducing its size and financial resources, other than its traditional defence of the country position, two further objectives became increasingly important for the Swiss Armed Forces. These included the fostering of peace around the world through international cooperation and assisting Switzerland during disasters (subsidary missions). After the 9/11 attacks, an additional discussion ensued that focused on the question, is conventional warfare was still applicable to the new terrorist threat? To date, it is not clear for which kind of operations Swiss soldiers should be trained. The discussion as to whether the armed forces have to prepare their personnel for the most probable scenario (i.e., disaster relief, peace support, support of the security organizations within Switzerland) or for the most extreme operations (i.e., country defence in case of a full scale foreign attack), still continues.

During the same period, the Netherlands Armed Forces had also changed. Policy within the Dutch forces was based on the Atlantic framework since the Netherlands has been a part of NATO since 1949. Due to the fall of the Berlin Wall, the "enemy-perception" changed and structural modifications were made. Since 1997, the Royal Netherlands Armed Forces was no longer a conscript Army. In addition, the organization was reorganized dramatically several times. It was divided into four separate "force" departments: Army (land force); Navy (including Marine Corps and the Naval Fleet); Air Force; and the Marechaussee (including Military Police tasks). In addition to these force departments, several civil institutions were established that increased the number of departments within the defence organization to seven. The size of the armed forces was also reduced considerably. From a force of 130,715 in the 1980s (1985: 250,000 when including the reserve component), it was reduced to 109,000 in 1993. Since then, the Dutch defence organization has further downsized to 75,964 in 1997 (at the beginning of the "professional" non-conscript Army). In 2010, the entire defence organization was approximately 50,000 employees (both military as well as civil support). It is still reducing its numbers.

In the Netherlands, the goals of the defence organization have changed since the end of the Cold War. The organization is now focused on three main goals: 1) protecting the integrity of its own and allied territory; 2) improving international legal order and stability; and 3) supporting civil authorities in law enforcement, disaster relief, and humanitarian aid both in the national as well as the international context. Dutch military performance, since the beginning of the 21st century, is characterized by four features: worldwide, expeditionary, joint, and multinational. This means that military personnel are deployed worldwide, in both humanitarian and combat operations and
in international teams in which all the different departments of the defence organization participate.

Like Switzerland, the Royal Netherlands Armed Forces left the traditional notion of being a warfighting or combat force to that of being peace operations and national homeland security. The difference between the Dutch and Swiss forces, however, is that Dutch troops are sent to conflict areas in order to establish or keep peace, whereas the Swiss are only deployed in post-conflict areas where they participate in peacekeeping missions. For this reason, the Dutch Armed Forces are deployed to countries such as Afghanistan, where they run the risk of getting killed or wounded. For example, military operations between 2006 and 2010 in Urugzgan (one of Afghanistan’s provinces) and service in the ISAF’s Regional Command South, has resulted in twenty-two Dutch fatalities. The developments described above, as well as several others, have changed the view of military professionalism.

WHAT IS MILITARY PROFESSIONALISM?

A profession is not the same as an occupation. Snider and Watkins suggest that the traditional definition of professionalism has two main characteristics that separate professions from occupations, the application of abstract knowledge to specific situations. Another characteristic of the military profession is the structured way of organizing the occupation, extensive education of its members, the goal of service to society as a whole, and a set of values and shared ethics among the members of the profession.

Snider and Watkins are not alone in studying military professionalism. Others that study this concept have approached it from several perspectives. For example, a historical one, that involves traditional military virtues such as honour and loyalty, or a philosophical one. The concept of normative professionalism, which refers to the competency of individuals to think critically about issues regarding their job assignments; meaning they are able to distinguish moral dilemmas within their professional environment. Others used, like Snider and Watkins, an organizational perspective. For example, Young argues that military professionalism has four components: 1) expertise; 2) responsibility; 3) corporateness; and 4) essential duties. We used these categories to partially describe how the threats mentioned in the following paragraphs could influence military professionalism. To categorize the different threats that are described in the literature or were additionally identified, we build on Snider and Watkins’ multi-level approach as well as the dynamic five-factor model proposed by Seiler and Pfister.

DIFFERENT FORMS OF THREATS

Snider and Watkins build on a multi-level conception to categorize threats to professionalism. Essential in this conception, is the use of three perspectives when addressing military professionalism. These include: 1) the client (society); 2) the professional institution (Armed Forces); and 3) the professional member (officer, non-commissioned officer, soldier, army civilian). In addition, Snider and Watkins defined two horizontal boundaries (civil-military relations and armed forces-soldier relations) that divide the three perspectives. Finally, they see a vertical division between these components, defining three main issues that are relevant in each component. These issues are military-technical (doctrinal), moral-ethical (a matter of institutional values), and political-social (a matter of adapting to unhelpful political guidance).

However, the multi-level framework of Snider and Watkins has the shortcoming in that not all threats can be deducted using this approach (e.g., what remains under-represented are the quality of people that are hired, their military education and training, and specific organizational cultures that threaten the individual perception of military professionalism). In order to broaden the scope of threats we combined this categorization with the Seiler and Pfister Dynamic Five-Factor Model of Leadership. This model defines five broad categories that influence leadership behaviour or behaviour in general. Within the Dynamic-Five Factor Model of Leadership, Seiler and Pfister state that 1) the individual’s competence, 2) the group/team, 3) the organization, 4) the general context, and 5) the immediate situation will influence leadership behaviour. The three levels described by Snider and Watkins above correspond to the factors of context, organization, and individual competence, but lack the factors group and the immediate situation. As such, it was decided to use these five factors to categorize the possible threats to military professionalism.

SURVEY DATA

In addition to describing the different possible threats, data from a Swiss and Dutch survey completed by military professionals is presented. In this survey, the participants had to rate the perceived impact of the threats that were described. In Switzerland, 14 military professionals having the rank of lieutenant-colonel from different elements of the Swiss Armed Forces completed the survey. In the Dutch Armed Forces, six professionals filled out the questionnaire and another four participated in interview-sessions in which the survey items were transformed into interview questions. The Dutch respondents varied in rank from master sergeant to lieutenant-colonel and two civil servants participated. A five-point scale ranging from 1 (not at all important) to 5 (very important) was used. For each level, the most important
threats perceived by the Swiss and Dutch participants are summarized. The survey participants do not represent in size or in rank for the Swiss nor the Dutch Armed Forces. Nevertheless, both samples do provide valuable initial insight into how professionals from both forces perceive different threats to their professionalism. Hence, they provide an overview and a first attempt for evaluating the importance of the different threats presented in this chapter.

INDIVIDUAL LEVEL THREATS

As previously mentioned, military professionalism consists of four key features (i.e., expertise, responsibility, corporateness, and essential duties). Each of these key features face several different threats on the level on the individual military professional.

Expertise

Expertise, for example, is comprised of several different sub-categories such as technical, social, tactical, and training expertise. Deficiencies in any one of these important sub-categories poses a severe threat to the professionalism of the individual. Technical expertise on military weaponry is important as it is the main expertise that differentiates the military profession from other professions. However, technical weapon expertise is not sufficient to ensure military expertise. A military professional also has to know what dangers are faced when using specific military material and know enough about the assets that are under his/her control to be able to effectively put those assets into action.

Social expertise is also important, as military professionals are often in leadership positions in which they are required to act in culturally critical situations (e.g., with the local population in a mission area). Hence, effective command, control, communication and leadership skills are necessary to professionally execute military missions. Besides having the relevant knowledge and skills to work with and motivate subordinates, leaders have to organize the placement of their subordinates in such a way that the right person is in the right place at the right time. This requires a considerable amount of planning skills. Military professionals, therefore, need to have sufficient expertise in tactics, operations planning and execution. In its fullest extent, they need the necessary skills to plan and execute military operations in the field while under pressure. Hence, they need experience with the efficient command and control of complex military organizational units. Sufficient tactical and operational proficiency and skills in the formation and management of large military organizational parts, provides the basis for being able to plan large scale operations. Planning and execution, however, has always been accompanied by bureaucracy. According to Young, mastering bureaucracy is a necessary competence as military personnel are part of and are constantly confronted with an enormous amount of bureaucracy. In addition to all these different competencies, which are mission critical, military professionals must have sufficient expertise to train others. Professionals also require sufficient experiences at various organizational levels. This also requires the competency and skill to plan, execute, survey, and ameliorate training for the troops under their command.

Swiss participants saw the lack of individual knowledge and leadership experience at the individual level as a severe threat to military professionalism. According to the Dutch respondents, the lack of training in general poses a severe threat to their professionalism. Consequently, participants from both armies fear that they are not well enough trained in their military skills and drills. Bureaucracy is generally not seen as a large threat by either the Swiss or Dutch force participants.

Responsibility

A military professional is trained in the disciplined application of legal (lethal) force. Therefore, they need to show discipline in order to responsibly operate and manage lethal weapons and equipment. At the same time, operating weapons themselves and leading people who operate such weapons and equipment also requires self-responsibility. Irresponsible behaviour, especially with potentially lethal equipment, was identified as a main threat to professionalism. Besides discipline and self-responsibility, taking social responsibility is just as important. Military professionals, as part of their duty, have to respect the connection between the armed forces and the civil society and fully understand their final objective is to serve the society as a whole. While being a professional, they are at the service of society and therefore have a responsibility to that society. Once assigned to a leadership role, they have to take responsibility for their followers, showing respect, being a good role model and, if needed, intervene if their followers do not act responsibly. They must work and lead professionally, take responsibility, and foster a feeling of corporateness.

The Swiss participants rated lack of responsibility as being important, but it was not seen as a main threat to military professionalism. For the Dutch, they rated responsibility as being high as they believe responsibility for their own troops, as well as for society and the local population in the mission area, is a crucial characteristic for all service members, not only military leaders. The Dutch, like the Swiss, do not consider responsibility as being a major threat to military professionalism.
Corporateness

Corporateness is closely tied to the personal motivation of the individual to serve in the military profession. In fact, corporateness is a positive motivator, apart from gaining new experience, for young recruits. Therefore, motivation to serve and an alignment of the individual with the professional identity of the organization are factors which foster corporateness or an esprit de corps. Corporateness often shows itself in camaraderie. If camaraderie is missing or the personal motivation is diminished, corporateness is at risk. Besides camaraderie, trust in the organization and in superiors also fosters corporateness. Hence, threats to this trust such as the unethical behaviour of superiors or the organization itself, or general distrust among the members can create major problems to maintaining military professionalism. Tied to trust and motivation is loyalty toward the organization, comrades and superiors. If this loyalty is threatened, for example from ethical principles that are not shared among the individual professional and the organization, leader, or comrades, then corporateness is at stake.

Swiss and Dutch participants rated a lack of trust in superiors as an important factor that might threaten military professionalism. However, both the Dutch and Swiss did not consider a lack of trust in the subordinates as being a considerable threat. The same goes for a lack of trust in the organization and the trust in society. Within the Dutch forces, trust is a major issue. The Dutch respondents consider camaraderie as one of the major characteristics of the forces and one of the main reasons they joined the armed forces. With respect to threats to military professionalism, the Dutch service members consider motivation as being very important although, for leaders, it is hard to keep their followers motivated due to cut-backs that result in less training and exercises, fewer missions and less challenge. This might explain why the respondents scored high on these scales.

Essential Duties

As already stated, the core essential duty of the military professional is to serve and protect society. A further essential duty is to master communication ranging from the individual face to face interactions to the use of highly complex technical communication systems. Young states that the military professional has to keep pace with the newest technological advances to be able to successfully fulfill their duties. A further duty lies in the generation of training to establish tasks, conditions and standards. Planning field operations is another essential duty. This encompasses the effective use of intelligence, interpreting doctrine, the developing operations or mobilization plans, planning logistics, and managing complex organizational relationships. Young sees a final duty of being a good role model and being able to intervene if their comrades or followers do not act responsibly.

Swiss participants see considerable threats to professionalism resulting from the lack of experience with large-scale operations as well as the lack of communication skills. As already stated, a lack of individual leadership skills is seen as the main threat for military professionalism. Swiss and Dutch participants do not perceive a lack in general management skills, military planning skills as well as technological knowledge as a threat to professionalism. The Dutch respondents did not share the issue of lacking operational experience in large-scale military operations as a threat. They note that during deployments, however, that as leaders they had to monitor moral disengagement. According to them, this is quite difficult since the leaders' own moral compass is gradually and unwittingly deteriorating as well.

GROUP LEVEL THREATS

Threats to professionalism explored at the level were also addressed at the group level (i.e., expertise, responsibility, corporateness, and essential duties), especially when one is obliged to work with others. Hence, team members, subordinates or superiors who a lack in expertise can pose a severe threat to ones own professionalism, as the team tasks cannot be fulfilled in a professional way. When rating the possible threats at the group level and therefore the threats originating from other military professionals, Swiss participants rated the lack of job motivation, the lack of a positive view of the army, and the lack of experience with large scale operations as considerable threats. Similar to the individual level threats, a lack of trust in the superior, organization, subordinates, and the lack of trust in society by other military members were also seen as considerable threats to professionalism at the group level. Finally, the lack of responsibility, lack of conflict resolution competence, and a lack of leadership skills were reported as considerable threats. Although similar threats were perceived at the group level, none were seen as severe as the lack of leadership competence at the individual level. In addition to these, however, other threats exist at the group level such as changes in group dynamics and the multiculturality of group composition.

Changes in Group Dynamics

Conformity pressure has always existed, especially among young people. This pressure has risen over the last 20 years. In Switzerland, for example, this peer pressure results in either an increase or decrease in the number of recruits from different parts of the nation. Young adults from the city are much less willing to serve in the army than are young adults from the more
rural regions. This greatly influences the composition of the force. The same is true regarding the level of education. People with higher education levels tend to withdraw from armed service, for many reasons, while people with lower education levels tend to fulfill their compulsory service. Swiss participants do not see changes in group dynamics as one of the main threats to professionalism.

Since the Dutch military is a professional organization without "compulsory military service," these problems and threats are not recognized in the organization. However, within the Dutch Armed Forces, servicemen consider the hardening of society as a threat toward military professionalism. The Dutch believe that traditional (military) values such as respect are diminishing, which might eventually lead to morally irresponsible behaviours. The Dutch respondents believed that the young lack respect for and knowledge of possibilities that exist within the forces. On the other hand, new military personnel come from a more harsh world that makes leaders fear morally irresponsible behaviour might occur during missions and in the barracks. According to the Dutch, respect is a key value that is necessary in these contexts. Within the Royal Netherlands Armed Forces, respect is addressed in two different ways. First, Dutch military personnel believe respect is a value of significant importance to the military. They consider respect amongst each other as being very important. The second way that respect is addressed entails the perceived respect the military gets from Dutch society. They remark that society is losing its respect for authorities and as a consequence, the Dutch Forces. The respondents do not consider this to be a major influence on military professionalism, however, they fear that when this continues to affect the organizational image, the organization will no longer attract the right professionals.

Multiculturalism
The cultural background of the men and women serving in the army has drastically changed over the last few decades within the Swiss as well as the Dutch Armed Forces. While 30 to 40 years ago most of the armed forces were composed of citizens whose families originated from the country they served, globalization, migration, and naturalization have changed the cultural background of societies and, of course, this has led to a more multicultural face of the armed forces. As the young recruits, now raised in a variety of culturally different manners, serve in the armed forces, professional officers have to take multiculturalism into account. Having Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, Atheists and other (religious) practices present within one armed force, requires the organization to adapt to this new troop composition. Hence, the armed forces can no longer be led or organized as they were 30 years ago when the composition of the troops was predominantly from one single cultural background, namely the national culture. The pressure to adapt to this multiculturalism may pose a threat to the traditional view of military professionalism.

Swiss participants did not at all see multiculturalism as a threat to military professionalism. This was an expected result since Switzerland has been a multicultural country with four language regions for many centuries. Within the Dutch Forces, about 10 percent of the servicemen have a culturally diverse background and about 14 percent are women. The Dutch participants in this study did not consider multiculturalism as a threat to military professionalism as they state they would rather work in a multicultural vice a homogenous team. This can probably be explained by the fact that the Dutch troops operate in multinational teams during deployments (e.g., patrol missions with German forces in Kunduz, Afghanistan). This finding may also be in part due to the fact that the Dutch society has for centuries been a melting pot of different cultures.

Organizational Level Threats
Apart from individual and group level threats, major threats to professionalism originate from organizational changes in the armed forces which directly influence the individual’s expertise, responsibility, corporateness, and essential duties. These threats can generally be separated into threats based on processes, culture, knowledge generation and transfer, strategy, mission and goals, and resources.

Processes
Within the last few decades, armed forces have embraced a wide range of business methods to increase efficiency and cost control. Total quality management, HR processes for achievement appraisal, personnel selection and promotion, total cost analysis, and many more have shown their potential in both the private and public sectors. At the basis of these organizational changes lies a change in the view of the military professional. Snider and Watkins suggest that military professionals are no longer seen as professionals, but instead, as employees. The shift from the traditional perspective on military tasks toward a more managerial perspective has resulted in a shift of focus away from effectiveness in executing military power toward efficiency. In many departments, however, this shift also resulted in increased bureaucracy. Bureaucracy of course, is in itself useful and needed; too much bureaucracy, however, often denies the elements of professionalism.
Swiss participants rated a lack in adequate managerial administration as a considerable threat. The Dutch considered the managerial perspective to be a threat toward military professionalism since it may lead to an inaccurate perceptions of the military job itself (i.e., thinking it is a "normal" managerial job). Moreover, it may lead to thinking in costs and efficiencies which is not always appropriate since military personnel have to concern themselves with their personal and collective safety and security; lives are at stake and they are not dealing with "real products."

Culture
The success of the armed forces is strongly dependent on the positive image the military generates in society, especially when they need to attract high quality people to military service. This positive image has diminished in Europe since the end of Second World War. The existing military values need to be lived and communicated within the organization as well as externally in order to generate an appropriate image of the military culture. As an example, military leadership focuses on instruction and command relationships. However, a gap exists between military leadership values and the participative leadership style fostered in current management and leadership theory, which is commonly experienced in society. New members entering the military organization are more accustomed to a participative leadership style and they do not know the culture and organizational values that are expected. Confronted with a more direct leadership style, new members are often irritated. Subsequently, the armed forces are then viewed as old-fashioned and a constant pressure exists for the armed forces to adapt its leadership behaviour according to the current view of society. Not being able, as an organization, to actively communicate their culture, goals, and values, both internally and externally, can lead to a false image of the organization.

It has also been argued that the military professional culture has to incorporate faithfulness, unlimited liability, and a strong respect for the connection between the armed forces and the society it serves. Further, the organization has to take responsibility for its employees. Even if such values exist, not being able as an organization to communicate these internally and externally as well as not being able to foster the desired culture can threaten military professionalism.

Swiss participants see the lack of a positive image within and outside of the organization, as well as a lack of organizational values, as considerable threats. The same is true for the lack of adequate communication with the Swiss society. The Dutch forces, in contrast, see the lack of a positive image within and outside of the organization as severe threats to military professionalism. In both armies, the lack of responsibility the organization takes for its employees is seen as a problem. Within the Netherlands defence organization, the employees often complain about the organization being too bureaucratic and that it is losing the "human-component". The Dutch participants consider this to be a major threat to professionalism.

Knowledge Generation and Transfer
The shift in culture and the organizational approach has also led to changes in knowledge generation and management. Today, the emphasis is less on developing knowledge, which is the core of becoming an expert to that of a more pure knowledge application within the armed forces. This decreases the expertise of the individual and reduces the capability of the organization to learn as a whole. One main objective of the armed forces, according to Young, is it to systematically create a class of people for whom war is a profession. Essential here is knowledge on the art and the science of conflict. There needs to be training to establish tasks, conditions and standards so that the individual, the group, as well as the organization as a whole are able to resolve conflict professionally. Hence, a lack of training or sufficient education for individuals, groups, and the organization itself, can pose a major threat to military professionalism. An interesting aspect of this that influences training and knowledge generation results from a more organizational view that develops. For example, the needs of leadership education and training will provide the practical management experience that can then be applied to the civil realm. The reason lies in the lack of prestige of the armed services and the lack of support of the economy, which directly influences the quality, and indirectly the quantity, of personnel within the Swiss Armed Forces.

The lack of adequate education and training are seen as considerable threats by the Swiss and the Dutch participants. Even though they consider these elements crucial for their profession, they believe the current educational system is insufficient. They also, however, consider the continued cut-backs and, as a consequence, less training opportunities as a threat to their professionalism.

Strategy, Mission, and Organizational Goals
Further threats to professionalism stem from changes in strategies, missions, and organizational goals. For example, many armed forces have shifted away from the goal of mission accomplishment to that of force protection (e.g., zero casualties). This leads to a shift in the view of what responsibility the individual, the group and the organization have to take. More importantly,
the main responsibility of the armed forces, namely protecting society, may be at risk due to this shift in goals. Armed forces are nowadays confronted with a multitude of missions within and outside of their own country. The increased use of the armed forces for non-combat, internal security missions could diminish the military warfighting expertise. The individual professionals, having to focus on national missions see a decline in or do not acquire the necessary competences for a possible future war. One major problem is that the tasks, expertise, roles and missions of the armed forces start to blur due to subsidiary missions and it becomes more and more unclear what the army has to do and what not to do. The essential duties of the individual professional as well as the organization, therefore, are harder to define and to communicate internally and externally.

The lack of organizational goals in “true” military operations was seen as a considerable threat to the Swiss participants. For the Dutch, this threat is not as apparent. Since the Royal Netherlands Armed Forces are participating in UN and peace-missions abroad, they are still confronted with an unstable conflict environment, even though warfighting missions no longer represent a large part of their tasks. Within the Dutch society and within the military, a discussion is ongoing as to what the main tasks of the defence organization should be. One can distinguish a shift toward more national activities of late, however, an official decision on this matter has not yet been made. The Dutch respondents consider clearly defined goals as an important element in military professionalism.

**Resources**

Perhaps one of the most severe threats to professionalism is the lack of resources due to budget cuts, reorganizations, and the downsizing of the armed forces. Lack of funding makes it impossible to execute multiple missions in a professional manner as the organization has to focus its resources. Lack of funding also results in a loss of technological competence leading again to a decrease in professionalism. This greatly affects the responsibility as well as the expertise factors that define military professionalism. Downsizing can lead to a major loss in expertise in the development and maintenance of the competence and the capability to maneuver large formations. It also greatly influences the professional interplay of all the elements of an armed force. This is a key expertise which is quickly lost but very hard to regain. The difficulty in regaining these competences lies in the loss of knowledge and experience when the forces are down-sized and large scale manoeuvres are no longer trained. It is critical to understand all the small caveats and problems that arise when commanding large-scale manoeuvres.

In addition, the development of problem-solving skills for these leadership situations is of high importance. The interplay between the different people within the command chains also has to be exercised and the different leaders have to learn how to efficiently work together. Building up experience, getting to know each other, training the leadership processes, and improving the problem-solving skills requires time and considerable dedicated effort. Both the Swiss and Dutch participants reported the lack of resources as a severe threat to their military professionalism.

**Context Level Threats**

Many of the developments and threats described so far originate from various changes in the general context in which the military organization is embedded. These can be separated into global developments, social developments and support, political support and economic support.

**Global Developments**

One of the major developments in the last century, for many armed forces, was the loss of the great enemy. This greatly impacted the corporate-ness of the armed forces. Snider and Watkins claim that with the dissolution of the great enemy and the according societal developments, the need for a military function has drastically diminished. Without a single large enemy, many armed forces were forced to start to justify their existence as well as their budgets. At the beginning of the new millennium, terrorist attacks, although always present, reached a new level. In addition to the loss of the great enemy and the evolution of a new blurry enemy, international operations experienced today have many more constraints as compared to earlier missions. Like the need for zero casualties and increased processes leading to more bureaucracy, more constraints within missions has resulted in situations where responsibility has shifted away from mission accomplishment. Swiss and Dutch participants did not consider these points as posing an immediate threat to military professionalism.

**Social Developments and Support**

Many citizens don’t want to be part of the armed forces. Hence, armed forces have to fight in the “war” for talent, where other economic-oriented organizations often have far better resources and competence. Social commitment plays a major role for recruiting good soldiers and cadre. The reduction of the size of the armed forces reduces visibility that can result in less desire to serve their country. As a result, shorter military service reduces public visibility and could lead to the gradual exclusion of the army from society. If
most young people complete military service, pressure to do so will remain high. Today, young people know fewer people who have completed service than they did during the time of conscript armies. After the fall of the Soviet Union, societal values began to change. Obedience and discipline are today seen as less important than autonomy, self-determination and self-development. These values, however, can only be adhered to or combined with military professionalism to a certain degree. As a result of these factors, active sympathy for and the prestige of the military from a societal perspective becomes challenged. This was extremely visible after the Vietnam War, in which US operations gradually received less and less support. This loss in visibility, prestige, and support for the military can of course, have a negative influence on the expertise of the individual soldier, on their overarching responsibility and on their feeling of corporateness. Swiss and Dutch participants, however, did not view these social developments as great threats to their professionalism.

**Political and Economic Support**

As politicians are directly responsible for setting the strategic goals of military organizations, deciding on defence budgets, and the definition of the specific missions that have to be accomplished. Due to budget cuts and the economic crisis, defence budgets have been among the first to be reduced. At the same time, national needs have surged, the result of an increase in natural disasters. Therefore, agreement has to be reached between political parties on the different goals, missions, and budget for the military. If this political agreement is not reached, the organization will continue to be confronted with conflicting goals. This can lead to great insecurity within the organization. A further development is that conscription has lost its significance within Europe. Many countries have already abolished conscription, which directly influences the quantity and potential quality of personnel available for its armed forces. As already mentioned, this reduces the visibility of the armed forces in society since fewer people are actively pursuing a military career and are less likely to be seen in uniform in the streets.

For the Dutch military, the problems described above are not apparent since it no longer is a conscript army. Of course, the organization still has to deal with the "Battle for Talent" and the political influences on decision-making and missions. Swiss participants mainly see the lack of agreement within the political parties regarding the armed forces and their missions and goals as well as the political influence in military decisions as considerable threats. Additionally, financial reductions in the military budget and the resulting lack of adequate reorganizations are also seen as considerable threats by the

Swiss and Dutch participants. A last threat identified on the context level by both groups of participants was the vanishing visibility of the armed forces within the public.

**SITUATION LEVEL THREATS**

Finally, several threats to military professionalism exist when it comes to the situations encountered in missions or military life. The encountered situations have become more complex, less known and more and more reflect non-military situations.

**Complexity**

Today, more actors are involved in military situations than 40 years ago. Missions are generally multinational, led by NATO, EU, UN, or others, in very different parts of the world. Many Non-Government Organizations (NGO) are also present. At the same time, as already stated, enemies are often not recognizable. No longer do they wear clearly identifiable uniforms. An insurgent may look like a farmer when one passes by in a convoy. Also, confrontation is less open. Mines, bombs, IEDs, and ambushes are the preferred tactic of war. In all these situations, civilians, NGOs, Government Organizations (GO) and other troops are involved. Complexity can make it difficult to behave responsibly and professionally. Also in the non-combat zone, the professional situation encountered has become more complex.

**Unknown Situations**

It has been argued that current military situations encountered are less clear than they were a few decades ago — when people expected a full-sized tank attack from the east. Today, the enemy is not as clearly defined as during the Cold War. Similar problems are encountered when defining the threats to the country and society. Currently, Switzerland has no serious foreign aggressor. Compared to the Cold War, where the enemy came from the east, the movements of a possible modern enemy are not predictable. As these military situations are less clear, training for this complexity is not easy and traditional education and training sessions are no longer sufficient.

**Non-Military Situations**

Most situations encountered by the army are not military in nature. Current training and instruction does not necessarily reflect war-time situations. Military focuses increasingly on training for possible situations encountered during subsidiary missions (i.e., situations the Swiss Armed Forces are mostly confronted with). The threat then lies with the potential lack of experience...
should a traditional combat mission be encountered. None of these situational level threats were seen as being of considerable or even of high importance by the Swiss participants. The Dutch consider the complexity of the mission area and the unclear insurgency, as an indicator that their personnel should be prepared to be adaptable.

**DISCUSSION**

Although the samples in both countries were small, the two surveys represent the first attempt to gather data on the perceived threats to professionalism. Some trends for the two nations, similar and dissimilar, were found. Many threats are seen as equally important or unimportant in both countries. For example, the lack of resources for the armed forces is seen as a main threat for military professionalism in the Netherlands as well as Switzerland. Similarly, the lack of a positive image of the armed forces poses a threat both to the Dutch and Swiss armed forces. The threat is more severe for the Dutch forces since the abolition of conscription as they have to compete to recruit their personnel from the regular job market. A poor image increases the difficulty to recruit adequate staff. Interestingly, however, the Dutch troops (referred to as “onze jongens” meaning, our sons) are quite popular, whereas, the political decisions and the military missions are not. Both groups of participants also see the lack of organizational responsibility toward the employees as a threat. Not feeling responsible for your organizational members may lead to decreasing motivation, dissatisfaction, focus more on the individual rather than on organizational goals, and a decrease in corporateness. These factors will result in a decrease in professionalism. Both the Swiss and the Dutch participants see the lack of training and expertise as threats. Swiss participants regard insufficient leadership expertise as well as the planning and command of large scale operations as problems. Dutch participants reported that reduced training opportunities were the direct result of budget cuts. Only the Swiss participants perceived the absence of organizational goals stemming from political disagreement and the influence of politics in the military decision-making process as being threats to professionalism. This threat stems from the transformation phase that the Swiss Armed Forces has been engaged in since the end of the Cold War. Contrary to the Dutch forces, the Swiss forces are not participating in any full-risk missions and do not have a clear enemy. Additionally, the Swiss Armed Forces are confronted with three main missions (national defence, subsidiary missions, and fostering peace) and neither the public nor the politicians have decided which has the highest priority. As a consequence, the armed forces are unable to determine operating costs and parliament is unable to agree on the military budget.

**CONCLUSION**

Both the Swiss and the Dutch Armed Forces report similar threats to their military professionalism; the lack of funding being the most significant concern. The lack of funding, though having different origins in both countries, leads to similar problems and threats. It is not an increase in salary or insufficient pay that is the basis for the perceived threat, but rather, the fear that military personnel will not be sufficiently trained and equipped to face the most severe danger, namely a large scale foreign attack or anti-guerrilla/terrorist operation on their home soil. Therefore, although the two Armed Forces differ in size, history, experience, professionalization, and combat experience, they share common problems and similar threats to the development and sustainment of their professionalism.

**ENDNOTES**


10. Ibid.
17. Ibid.
25. Ibid.
33. Ibid.
34. Young, 2006.
41. Young, 2006.
43. Ibid.
44. Young, 2006.
47. Ibid.
48. Ibid.
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