1

Introduction

Dennis Blair

The second volume of *Military Engagement* relates the stories of how democratic civil-military relations developed in five world regions and fourteen individual countries. This introduction provides some background on those who authored these stories and describes the patterns observed and the lessons that can be drawn from them.

The Authors

The regional summaries were written by a team of coauthors, almost all having both practical experience in armed forces or defense ministries of their countries and subsequent careers with security think tanks. They also contributed ideas and criticisms of the analysis and recommendations in the companion volume. Juan Emilio Cheyre, while chief of staff of the Chilean army, took the final steps to bring his service out of the Pinochet era. Matthew Rhodes is a professor at the Marshall Center in Germany, an institution at the center of military-military relations among countries around the world. Istvan Gyarmati, who participated in the early brainstorming sessions for the handbook, was deputy defense minister of Hungary during the Hungarian armed forces' transition from its Warsaw Pact organization to meet NATO standards. Muthiah Alagappa, a general in the Malaysian Army, has become the foremost scholar of Asian civil-military relations subsequent to

his retirement. Tannous Mouawad served as Lebanon's military attaché to the United States and the chief of Lebanon's military intelligence service. Martin Rupiya was an officer in the Zimbabwean National Army and now heads a security affairs think tank in South Africa

Each of the regional coauthors recruited additional authors to write the individual case studies; two of them wrote a case study as well. Many of the case study authors have had practical experience in the military role during democratic transition or are scholars in the field. Narcís Serra was minister of defense in Spain following the Franco era and participated personally in many of the defense reforms discussed in chapter 16. Defense researcher Marton Harsanyi assisted in the writing of this chapter. Carolina Hernandez was a member of the Davide Commission in the Philippines that beginning in 1989 investigated the series of military coups against democratically elected governments following the departure of President Ferdinand Marcos. Julio Hang (Argentina), Juan Salgado (Chile), Humberto Corado Figueroa (El Salvador), Raymundo Ferrer (Philippines), and Biram Diop (Senegal) were all serving officers during many of the events they described in their case studies. Raymond Maalouf, who wrote the case study on Egypt, served in the Lebanese Army and has observed the Egyptian armed forces at close hand. Vilmos Hamikus, author of the case study on Hungary, is a Hungarian diplomat who participated in the reform events he describes. Other case study authors are well known think tank scholars: Rizal Sukma of Indonesia, Suchit Bunbongkarn of Thailand, and Ecoma Alaga and Richard Akum in West Africa.

The regional summaries and case studies provided rich material both to generate ideas about the role of the armed forces in democratic development and to test hypotheses. Many of the authors engaged in lively debates by e-mail; ideas were proposed, tested, and developed further. It was a diverse and powerful team that produced a whole much greater than the sum of its parts.

The Stories

Early in the project, the editor attempted to find a standard format for the regional summaries and the case studies. It quickly became clear that the stories of regions and countries were so different that uniformity would have been not only impractical but also would have diminished their value. Democratic transitions in different regions and countries confronted different obstacles and developed a range of approaches to surmount them; they proceeded at varying speeds, some taking months and others years; and different leaders had a huge impact by either instigating or blocking reform. Only by reading many stories can one begin to understand the complexity of shifting a country's armed

forces from supporting an authoritarian regime to serving an elected democratic government.

Thus the story of each region and countries therein is unique. However, similarities and common features emerge from the interplay of five main components that determine the course of democratic development in a country: an autocratic or transitioning government; the armed forces, both its leaders and the entire officer corps; other powerful and influential leaders within the country including politicians, businessmen, and faction heads; popular opinion; and outside influences. Of these five, the armed forces act in a more consistent manner across different countries than do the others. While subject to many different internal forces such as their regional or ethnic composition, which can give rise to rivalries, they act in a more unified and decisive way than the other elements. As described in volume one, the armed forces have an underlying ethos of defending their country that influences their actions. This ethos motivates them to defend even repressive governments against enemies from outside their borders but also sets limits on the support they will give to dictators against their own people. Armed forces have a strong sense of institutional autonomy and tend to resist interference in what they regard as their internal affairs. Armed forces have a sense of history—actions they take in the present are shaped by their understanding of what has happened in the past and their expectation of how history will judge them in the future. In order to influence and assist armed forces in repressive regimes to favor democratic development, it is necessary to understand both their own characteristics and their interplay with the other powerful groups within their country.

Insights

Interesting and important patterns can be discerned across different regions and countries. They are crucial to understanding and assisting democratic development in other countries in future.

Long Marches

The case studies of Nigeria, Thailand, and the Philippines, as well as the account of Turkey in the regional chapter on the Middle East and North Africa, provide the long view of the role of powerful armed forces in democratic development. In these cases, democratic development, still not complete in all four countries, has proceeded over the course of decades, characterized by steps forward followed by retreats. Nigeria is now in its fourth republic, with the prior three having ended in military coups. Thailand in 2000 seemed on the road to a solidly democratic role for its armed forces, but in 2006 military

leaders deposed a democratically elected prime minister, albeit one who was abusing his power. The armed forces of the Philippines helped depose the dictator Ferdinand Marcos but then mounted multiple coup attempts against one of his democratically elected successors and helped bring down another. The Turkish Armed Forces conducted multiple coups against democratically elected presidents over many years.

In most of these cases of multiple military interventions, national governments were not able to deliver economic development, basic security, and social order to the countries they were elected to lead. Military leaders stepped in because they believed that their governments were failing in their basic functions. However, in none of these countries did military coup plotters believe that direct military rule or military-supported dictatorship should be permanent. The overall trend has been toward greater democracy, with the armed forces playing less of a high-handed and privileged role in determining the fate of national governments than they had in the past. Another overall trend from these countries that have experienced multiple coups has been a gradual reduction over time in the privileged position of the armed forces. Once an elected a government comes to power, even though the military services retain immunities and privileges, democratic forces come into play that can alter over time the balance of civil-military relations in favor of democratic political control of the armed forces. While still capable of removing a government, the Thai armed forces of 2012 do not have the power they did in 1957; the Turkish army of 2012 is not the all-powerful force of 1980. These examples are relevant to Egypt and Pakistan today, where some elements of democracy coexist with powerful military services.

Expanding Economies and Maturing Societies

The regional summary of East Asia in chapter 6 describes how, by its very nature, economic and social development after World War II eroded the justification for military-supported dictatorship. As Muthiah Alagappa puts it,

> Over time, however, sustained economic development strengthened the capacity of other state institutions, broadened the base of middle and working classes, and made for a much more complex society. Demanding greater political participation and government accountability, growing civil and political societies resisted authoritarian and autocratic rule. Income distribution concerns arising from rapid economic growth but unequal distribution of the benefits of that growth, or in some cases from economic crisis and failure, also undermined the legitimacy of authoritarian and autocratic governments.

One does not have to accept the thesis that the rise of a middle class inevitably causes democratic development to understand that economic power engenders a desire for political power. Democratic development has provided a well-trodden path to political power for the newly affluent and disgruntled, from English noblemen forcing the Magna Carta on King John in 1215 to the national consensus in favor of representative government following the death of President Francisco Franco in Spain in 1975 (chapter 16) to the pressure on and ultimate removal of President Suharto in Indonesia in 1998 (chapter 7). When wealth is concentrated in the hands of oligopolies, a dictator can strike a bargain with the very rich few to delay more widespread pressure for reform, but it is becoming more difficult to sustain this arrangement in a world in which telecommunication is spreading knowledge. In the cases of South Korea and Taiwan, the military and business elites came to a collective realization that further democratic development was inevitable for their countries. The democratic elections of 1988 in Korea and 1996 in Taiwan did not mean that the armed forces and the industrial magnates renounced all their privileges. However, it did give other groups in these countries the means to advance more representative government and to reduce over time the power of the military and business elites. These examples have relevance to the current situations in Russia and China, in which autocratic governments and oligarchs are facing rising affluence and dissatisfaction among wider groups of their citizens.

Putting Countries Back Together after Conflict

Two case studies, El Salvador (chapter 5) and South Africa (chapter 13), describe the integration of authoritarian government armed forces with guerrilla fighters after years of bitter combat. In El Salvador the fighting had been close and brutal, with atrocities committed by each side against the other. In the South African case, fighting had been on a smaller scale and most of it in neighboring countries where Umkhonto we Sizwe and African People's Liberation Army irregulars had been based, and where the South African Defense Force had pursued them. In both cases, integration of former enemies was not easy. Issues of retribution, distribution of command positions, employment for those discharged from service, and many other problems had to be identified and resolved. Many countries still face the challenge of forming true national armies. In Myanmar regional armies still battle central government forces; in Lebanon Hezbollah is more powerful than the Lebanese Army. At this writing, fighting still rages in Syria between the government army and rebels. The examples of South Africa and El Salvador give hope that national armies can be created in a democratic transition after the end of civil wars.

Case studies of Argentina (chapter 3) and Chile (chapter 4) tell the stories of newly democratic countries coming to grips with accountability for brutal actions by combatants on both sides in civil wars under authoritarian regimes. Of the two, Argentina's process has been far less successful. Despite attempts to establish even-handed justice, limiting punishment to those who gave illegal orders or who acted brutally themselves, successive Argentine governments have pursued those who were political opponents but taken no action against political allies. In contrast, in Chile the Mesa de Diálogo capped a process that satisfied both citizens and the armed forces that the objectives of both justice and reconciliation had been served.

Accountability has been an issue in other countries as well, from Spain to Sierra Leone. It should be reassuring to those soldiers in Bahrain, Iran, Pakistan, and Syria who have not personally committed brutal, unlawful actions that they have nothing to fear and the reputation of their services has everything to gain from an accountability process in a democratic transition.

Good Leaders Make a Difference

Reading many of these stories, one is struck by the impact that individual leaders have. Spain's transition to democracy from Francoist dictatorship would not have been as successful as it was without General Manuel Gutiérrez Mellado (chapter 16). The events of 2011 in Tunisia might have been different with someone other than General Rachid Ammar in command of the Tunisian Armed Forces. If General Prabowo Subianto had been chief of the Tentara Nasional Indonesia instead of General Wiranto, Indonesia's transition to democracy could well have been halted by bloodshed (chapter 7). General Jean Alfred Diallo's leadership was a major factor in establishing Senegal as a democracy with supportive armed forces (chapter 12). Once they became presidents of their countries, former generals Kemal Atatürk in Turkey, Chun Doo-hwan in South Korea, Fidel Ramos in the Philippines (chapter 8), and Prem Tinsulanonda in Thailand (chapter 9) all chose to relinquish power to democratically elected successors. These senior officers are widely respected for the correct and in many cases courageous decisions they made that helped move their countries along the path to democracy. Undoubtedly, there are officers in Pakistan, Egypt, Iran, China, and even North Korea who may someday have the opportunity to make such decisions and leave a similar legacy. It is vital for leaders from democratic countries to identify such officers, get to know them, and support them in moving their countries onto a peaceful democratic path.

Good Laws Make a Difference

Several of the case studies describe in detail the process of establishing a solid legal framework for civil-military relations after a period of autocratic rule. The case study on Spain (chapter 16) describes the series of constitutional provisions, laws, and royal decrees issued after President Franco's death in 1975 that gradually established the basis for democratic political control of the formerly independent and untouchable armed forces. One important area described in detail in this chapter is the reform of military justice to bring that system into conformity with the national justice system. The case study of the Philippines (chapter 8) describes the 1987 Constitution that reestablished the oversight role of the legislature and the Commission on Appointments and created the Commission on Human Rights, all designed to provide impartial oversight of the Armed Forces of the Philippines. Other important legal reforms at the time were the separation of the Philippine Constabulary and the police from the armed forces. One key shortcoming of the 1987 Constitution was its preservation of the armed forces' mission of "protecting the people." This provision provided the reason or, more accurately, the pretext for a series of coups during the Aquino administration.

It is possible for the laws on a country's books to be correct but for them to be disregarded or subverted. The Philippine case study emphasizes that many of the bodies established by the 1987 Constitution have yet to achieve full effectiveness. The case of Nigeria (chapter 11) is also instructive. The laws for democratic political control existed from the time of independence. However, from an early stage, as the authors state, "though 'civilian oversight of military budgeting in the first republic' seemed 'total,' it was largely 'exclusive,' residing in the hands of a few persons within the executive arm of government." Over time, autocratic presidents bypassed the legislature, and eventually even presidents lost control of individual powerful senior military officers. During this entire period, the Nigerian constitution and civil-military laws remained exemplary, just unobserved.

One of the ways to ensure that laws have actual effect is to involve military leadership in their formulation. This process in Spain entailed negotiation with military authorities each step of the way. These negotiations lengthened the process of changing the laws, and the law made some concessions to military autonomy, but this approach ensured that the military leadership had a stake in the new laws and procedures once passed and made for a more durable civil-military structure.

These examples provide instructive precedents when considering the contemporary cases of Egypt, the Central Asian countries, and North Korea, all of

which will need to establish new civil-military relations as they transition from autocratic governments.

Conclusion

When I undertook this project, I was hoping that I would find a magic key that military officers and officials of established democracies could use to unlock a commitment to democracy within their counterparts in autocratic countries. I was looking for examples in which outsiders were able to influence decisively or persuade convincingly those in autocratic regimes to favor democratic transitions. I did not find the single magic key. There are many different factors that determine the attitudes and actions of military leaders when it comes to democratic transitions. Some of the attitudes are built up over many years, some of them cause military leaders to take the initiative in withdrawing support from dictators, and some come to the surface during crises. Influencing the armed forces to support democratic transition is a complex challenge in which outsiders cannot play a decisive role—but they can play an important role. Outsiders do make a difference, and military officers and defense officials have in the past and can in the future shape the attitudes of their counterparts serving autocratic regimes in favor of democracy and can persuade them, when opportunities arise, to support democratic transitions.

The record is very clear that for military leaders in autocratic regimes, internal factors are most important in their decisionmaking on the vital questions of governance. Probably the most important internal factor is the competence and success of the authoritarian regime they serve in providing economic growth, social stability, and public security to the country. If an autocratic government can deliver these public goods, even at the expense of democratic rights and governance, military leaders are generally reluctant to support change. When the autocratic government falters in these areas, however, military support for the regime will weaken or disappear. To take an extreme example, it was when the Argentine junta destroyed the country's economy and lost a war to Great Britain that it lost the support of both the citizenry and the armed forces (chapter 3). The armed forces will often support dictators against an external threat. This was why the armed forces of Chile and El Salvador remained loyal to dictators for years and fought savagely against insurgent forces they considered to be inspired by Cuba, supported by the Soviet Union, and a threat to their country (chapters 4 and 5, respectively). When the Soviet Union collapsed, the military forces in those countries saw less justification in supporting dictators and were open to democratic transitions.

More positively, it is clear from many of these case studies that dictators, even if they enjoy economic success and provide social and public security, do not have an easy time maintaining the support and control of their armed forces. The more they favor one set of generals or one military faction that they consider reliable, the more they antagonize other generals and other factions. The more they allow loyal senior generals to enrich themselves by corruption and to keep their assignments for many years, the more they disgust more junior and idealistic officers who value military professionalism and want to advance to higher rank. In this regard, the case study of the Philippines (chapter 8) is instructive and typical. To maintain their power over their armed forces, dictators often rely on a separate intelligence service or secret police to report to them directly on the loyalty of military leaders and units, a party structure within military units with an independent reporting chain, arbitrary rotation of senior officers to detach them from their power bases, and marginalization of popular military leaders. The Leninist dictatorships of the Soviet Union perfected these techniques, and they were copied by the communist Warsaw Pact countries, North Korea, and China. History has shown, however, that it is difficult to maintain these systems across successive generations of dictators, especially as countries become wealthier and their societies more mature. Both South Korean and Taiwanese dictators used many of these techniques, yet the leaders of their armed forces decided that democracy was a better system for their countries.

The armed forces of a country have a keen sense of when a dictator is outstaying his welcome, allowing corruption to flourish, pursuing unpopular policies, and failing to provide for his succession. The armed forces realize that their reputation, prestige, and popularity are deteriorating with the status of the dictator, and they often take the initiative to distance themselves from the dictator's regime. So it was in Indonesia (chapter 7), Tunisia, and Egypt (chapter 18), where the armed forces had begun to detach support from Presidents Suharto, Ben Ali, and Mubarak, and when a financial crisis and large-scale protests occurred, military leaders in these countries quickly withdrew their support for the dictators who had promoted them to their high positions and whom they had served for many years.

Against this backdrop of internal developments in an autocratic country, the regional surveys and case studies in this volume also document the influence of outside countries, and the role that military-military relations can play. The positive effect of more emphatic American support for democracy following the end of the cold war is cited in the cases of El Salvador (chapter 5), sub-Saharan Africa (chapter 10), and Egypt (chapter 18). Even during the cold war, NATO

had a positive influence on Spain, following the death of Franco, and on Portugal and Greece. During the post–cold war era, the prize of NATO membership spurred the development of democratic civil-military relations in many countries of the Warsaw Pact, as described in the Europe-Eurasia regional summary (chapter 14) and in detail in the case of Hungary (chapter 15). The positive effect of military education in the war colleges and other courses in democratic countries is documented for Latin American countries (chapter 2), Indonesia (chapter 7), the Philippines (chapter 8), Hungary (chapter 15), Egypt (chapter 18), and Lebanon (chapter 19). The positive influence of participation in peacekeeping operations is described for the armed forces of Chile (chapter 4), El Salvador (chapter 5), Senegal (chapter 12), and South Africa (chapter 13). The influence of personal conversations between the military officers in democratic countries and their counterparts in dictatorships comes up in the Egypt case study (chapter 18) and in Indonesian president Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's preface to the companion volume to this one.

The companion volume describes the many points of influence that the armed forces of democratic countries have with their counterparts in autocratic regimes. What the regional surveys and case histories in this volume make clear is that for these influences to make a difference, they have to be applied with understanding and persistence. Even in countries where dictators have a firm hold on both their people and their armed forces, as is true for the hard cases described in chapter 7 of the companion volume, the armed forces of the democracies need to continue to set a good example of civil-military relations, and they need to advocate the advantages the armed forces enjoy in democratic countries. When it comes to dealing with an individual autocratic country, departments and ministries of defense as well as individual officers and officials need to understand the state of democratic development in that country, the aspirations and fears of its military leaders, and the potential opportunities for influence. Through institutional contacts such as professional training, exercises, conferences, and visits, the democracies need to demonstrate how democratic governance is advantageous to the armed forces and to explain the fundamental characteristics of democratic civil-military relations. Individual officials and officers, as they get to know counterparts in autocratic regimes, need to work with them persistently and skillfully to persuade them of the advantages of a democratic system to them personally, to their military services, and to the people they have sworn to defend.