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978-0-521-11667-1 - The Military Transition: Democratic Reform of the Armed Forces

Narcís Serra

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The Military Transition

Civilian control of the armed forces is crucial for any country hoping to achieve a successful democratic transition. In this remarkable book, Narcís Serra, Spanish Minister of Defence between 1982 and 1991, explains the steps necessary to reduce the powers of armed forces during the process of a democratic transition. Spain's military reform proved a fundamental and necessary element for the consolidation of Spanish democracy and is often viewed as a paradigm case for the transition to democracy. Drawing on this example, Serra outlines a simple model of the process and conditions necessary to any democratic military reform. He argues that progress in military transition must include legal and institutional reforms, changes to the military career structure and doctrine, and control of conflict levels.

NARCÍS SERRA has a BA in Economics from the University of Barcelona and a PhD in Economics from the Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB). In 1976 he was appointed to the post of Professor in Economic Theory, first at the University of Seville and then at the UAB.

Following this academic experience, in 1977 he was appointed Catalan Minister of Town and Country Planning and Public Works in the Regional Government (Generalitat de Catalunya), and in April 1979 he became the first elected Mayor of Barcelona since the Spanish Civil War. In December of 1982 he was appointed Spanish Minister of Defence in the Government of Felipe González, and left the post in 1991 to become Vice-president of the Spanish Government. From 1986 until 2004, Narcís Serra was member of the Spanish Parliament representing the province of Barcelona.

Since 2000 Narcís Serra has been the President of the CIDOB Foundation. During this time, he has promoted the creation of the Barcelona Institute for International Studies (IBEI) and has acted as expert consultant for a number of Ministries of Defence of Latin American and Eastern European countries.

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Translated by

PETER BUSH



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