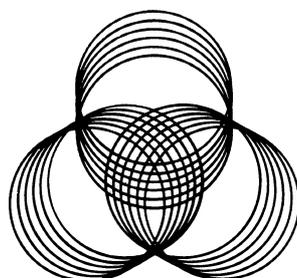


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Towards More Effective Assistance in Security Sector Reform

Policy Brief

Based on the IFSH/United Nations University Project
"The Role of the Military in Post-Conflict Peacebuilding"¹

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1. Introduction

Security sector reform (SSR) is generally regarded as the policy framework through which a growing number of donors address security problems in post-conflict societies. SSR must be understood as an integral part of the overall process of post-conflict peacebuilding. By the same token, developments in SSR depend on, and shape, the wider dynamics of the reconstruction process.

The overall aim of SSR is to enable states to ensure national defense and protect citizens within policy and budgetary constraints that are consistent with national development goals. Besides its military-driven goals, SSR should maximize the capacity of all security actors so that they actively contribute to social, economic and political development.

Among others, SSR needs to consider the following issues:

- transition from military regimes;
- the challenge of divided societies;
- size and budget of security forces;
- disarmament and demobilization (reintegration of soldiers);
- democratization;
- and issues of good governance.

- 1 The project was sponsored by the United Nations University, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Germany.
- 2 With contributions from: Anthony A. Anderson (Independent international management consultant, Canada), Stephen Blackwell (University of Babes-Bolyai), Thomas Bruneau (Center for Civil-Military Relations, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey), David Darchiashvili (Caucasian Institute for Peace), Ann Fitz-Gerald (Cranfield University), Andres Fontana (Central University of Venezuela), Jusuf Fuduli (American University), Nibaldo H. Galleguillos (McMaster University), Karen Guttieri (Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey), Dylan Hendrickson (King's College), Fernando Isturiz (International Peace Academy), Ho-Won Jeong (George Mason University), Julius Waweru Karangi (Kenya Defence Staff College, Peace Support Training Center), Chetan Kumar (Office of the Special Representative of UNSG for Children and Armed Conflict), Zoran Kusovac (Jane's Security), William Maley (University of New South Wales), Sophie Richardson (International Crisis Group), Allison Ritscher (Joint Interrogation Center Vaihingen), Peter Sainsbury (Freelance Journalist), Andres Serbin (Central University of Venezuela), Ekaterina A. Stepanova (Institute for World Economy and International Relations, IMEMO), Biljana Vankovska (Geneva Centre for Democratic Control of Armed Forces), Rocky Williams (Institute for Security Studies, Pretoria), Stefan Wolff (University of Bath). Please note that this report is a synthesis of individual project members' contributions. The report reflects a diversity of opinions and convictions. Contributors do not necessarily share the opinions and support the details of comments made by other members of the team. In the context of this project, unanimity of opinions is neither possible nor desirable. The diversity reflected in this report is meant to initiate further debate and analysis.

2. Principles and criteria

The restructuring of the security sector is inextricably determined by the specific context within which such initiatives occur. It is therefore difficult to advocate a general strategy that can be adopted by different governments in the restructuring of civil-military relations in their own country. It is possible, however, to provide a generic set of principles, criteria and methodological assumptions that will be applicable to all transformation processes regardless of historical, political and cultural peculiarities.

Any attempt to engage in a process of security sector reform should explicitly outline those principles on which security sector reform will be based. The following broad principles are proposed as foundations in this regard and should, ideally, find reflection in the appropriate constitutional provisions, legislative frameworks, standard operating procedures and institutional culture of the armed forces themselves:

- The principle of civil supremacy entails four key principles, which should be respected by both the civil authorities and the armed forces in the execution of their respective responsibilities; namely the principles of the separation of powers, legality, accountability, and transparency.
 - Decisions on the roles, responsibilities, tasks, organizational features, and personnel requirements of the security forces should be made in accordance to the circumstances of a developing country engaged in a difficult and complex transition.
 - The determination of the roles, responsibilities, tasks, organizational features, resource requirements and personnel requirements of the security forces should be done in a manner that is affordable to the country concerned particularly in light of a limited resource base and pressing demands on its budget from all sectors of society.
 - The roles and responsibilities of the security sector should be enshrined in the Constitution. The Constitution should ensure that the security sector will respect human rights as reflected in the Constitution, domestic and international law, and will understand and operate within the framework of the democratic process within the country concerned.
 - Security forces should be non-partisan in their political behavior and should not further the interests of and/or involve themselves in political activities.
 - The conduct of security policy and the management of security matters shall be handled in a consultative and transparent manner and shall encourage a high level of parliamentary and public participation without endangering the lives of personnel and without prejudicing the ability of the security forces to conduct legal and legitimate operations.
- National security shall be sought primarily through efforts to meet the political, economic, social and cultural rights of the country's people; and the activities of the security sector shall be subordinate to and supportive of these efforts.
 - Both the political authorities and the leadership of the armed forces and other security sector actors shall strive to build and maintain high levels of dialogue and partnership in all their dealings with one another. Such collaboration should be predicated on regular and continuous interaction between these interlinked communities and will occur within the hierarchy of authority and oversight as established in the country concerned.

3. Main challenges

Most developing countries continue to face threats and challenges to their national interests, sovereignty and internal stability that will continue to require the maintenance, preparation and deployment of security forces in a variety of roles in the medium to long-term. Typically these tasks, based on a preliminary assessment of the country's strategic environment, will require the maintenance of the capabilities to execute a wide variety of secondary and "non-traditional" operations (peace missions, internal law and order responsibilities and, in some cases, reconstruction and development tasks).

In this context, internal and external actors face – and must respond to – the following challenges:

- The armed forces' traditional role of external defense is no longer suitable to address today's needs for participation in the complex spectrum of peace support operations. These additional roles have to be incorporated into armed forces doctrine, organization and training.
- In a post-conflict settlement setting, peacekeeping functions have been modified and expanded to such areas as maintaining public order and providing logistical support for political and social transition. International security forces need to be prepared to respond to these additional tasks.
- The extent to which the military can get involved in reconstruction and rehabilitation should be considered in terms of available civilian skills and expertise. A proper division of roles and functions between the military units and civilian agencies should be negotiated in a local operational context.
- Dealing with unarmed civilians requires restraints of force and conciliatory measures based on dialogue and mediation. The integration of peacekeeping roles into community building requires partnerships with the local population.
- Reform of the military/police education system requires an emphasis on human rights issues and democratic

oversight of the security sector.

- The international community lacks a comprehensive strategy for conflict resolution and security sector reform in the post-conflict and reconstruction environment.

4. General recommendations

The international community should consider the implementation of the following actions to assist in the process of security sector reform:

- SSR is likely to succeed if the institutional structures provided in a peace agreement are acceptable to the warring parties, and they respond not just to their security needs but also to their more fundamental political aspirations. At a minimum, these aspirations must be transformed, so that they can be accommodated within the new structures.
- In order to be successful, SSR requires the presence of strong leadership that can create a broad consensus to marginalize "spoilers" and prevent their agenda from assuming a dominant position in public discourse and in the political process.
- International criminals and terrorists exploit states with poorly functioning security sectors to harbor their activities. This must provide increased incentive to regional and international actors to assist such states to reform their security sectors on an urgent and comprehensive basis to prevent the spread of cross-border crime and international terrorism.
- SSR must include the military, security intelligence, border control and financial control functions along with the usual law enforcement, judicial and corrections functions as an integrated system based on the principles of rule-of-law and civilian control.
- The reform process must go beyond institutional reform and include the transformation of public security attitudes from ones of fear, disrespect or disinterest to ones of trust, cooperation and voluntary compliance.
- International and regional peacekeeping and peace support forces which are often deployed as surrogate security institutions to states characterized by political, legal and security vacuums, should be used more effectively. They have to support the broader aims of security sector reform, without compromise to their security role and their requirements for force protection. The positive model as a functioning security institution, which an international force typically represents, should be exploited as a benchmark for the local reform process.
- International forces should be encouraged, and resources provided, to engage more fully with the local population. Their specialized personnel (e.g. legal, medical, religious, engineering, communications, public affairs, logistics, education and administrative

officers) should be encouraged to engage with their local counterparts.

- An overall reconciliation process should serve as the foundation for re-structuring the security forces as legitimate and democratically directed institutions.
- Coordination must be improved among all armed forces (among international actors, and between them and local actors), and a lead actor (or force contributor/component) that will be perceived as unbiased by *all* conflict parties must be identified.
- Media and other opinion-makers must advocate the need for improving inter-ethnic relations and eventually equal ethnic and minority representation among the security forces.

5. Specific recommendations for donors

Most donors focus on narrower SSR objectives and face real dilemmas in providing focused and effective assistance in response to the wide agenda, and multifaceted needs, of national capacity building in the formulation and implementation of reformed security policies. On the one hand, this reflects the immense difficulties of working in post-war environments, which lends itself to "crisis management" approaches. On the other hand, it stems from the lack of a shared understanding within the donor community of what SSR means, from conflicting donor objectives, and weak internal capacity in this area.

In view of developing more coherent and sustainable programmes of assistance for SSR, the following recommendations should be embraced by donors:

- It is crucial to develop a shared understanding among national and international partners of what SSR means, the objectives of external assistance, and how these can be achieved.
- In countries with weak institutions and persisting tensions, greater emphasis must be placed on preparing the political terrain for SSR before encouraging ambitious and sensitive institutional reforms.
- Prior to designing appropriate steps of SSR, a thorough needs-assessment is necessary, preferably done by teams that combine international and local actors (and stake holders).
- Appropriate timeframes and normative frameworks for SSR must be developed, which allow space for local norms and conceptions of security to adapt to international standards of security-sector governance.
- SSR assistance must be integrated more effectively into wider post-conflict reconstruction strategies, particularly with respect to macro-economic stabilization and adjustment programmes.
- Strategic coordination on SSR issues must be enhanced by building an "up-stream" culture of co-operation through political dialogue and joint policymaking initiatives.

- Strategic reform efforts must be facilitated at the national level by prioritizing activities that develop and enhance human resources. An appropriate balance has to be negotiated between external "models" of SSR and local interests and capacity.

6. *Region-specific recommendations*

Most of the main challenges outlined above apply at the international level, yet responses to these challenges must be tailored to the characteristics of the regional (or local) environment in which they take place. The following recommendations reflect on regional experiences that served as case studies for this report.

Chile

Given the country's very young democratic experience, security sector reform in Chile cannot happen in a vacuum. The government needs to follow a multi-pronged strategy: (1) engage the armed forces in discussions on the need for reform; (2) develop a correlation of political forces necessary to enlist the opposition and pro-military political sectors into acquiescing to reforms; (3) address human rights organizations' demands for justice; and (4) foster public appreciation for the need for national reconciliation.

Subsequently, military reform must focus on the establishment of civilian supremacy over the armed forces; presidential prerogatives; regarding appointments, promotions, and retirements; civilian control over civil and militarized police forces; military accountability of intelligence and security agencies (including the budget); new curricula in military academies, in accordance with democratic theory; civilian oversight over the nature, shape and extent of military training abroad; and greater control and accountability over military courts.

Colombia

The security sector in Colombia must be considered in the context of ongoing conflict characterized by drug trade (producers and processors), leftist guerrillas, and the so-called paramilitaries. The police originally had responsibility for countering the drug trade. Despite some successes by the police in the past, the drug trade is currently thriving. The leftist guerrillas both occupy land and are extremely active. The paramilitaries are also becoming increasingly active and powerful. There is no option, therefore, but for the armed forces to become directly involved in the struggles against these actors in the conflict.

The Colombian armed forces are becoming an increasingly prominent actor in the society, but the civilian government cannot keep pace. Indeed, civilians seem largely uninterested in the armed forces and the way in which they fight the various actors in Columbia's numerous conflict fronts. Security sector reform in

Colombia should include not only the security forces – police and armed forces – but also the civilians. They need to develop the culture, structures, and processes whereby they can participate, and indeed control, the major changes taking place in the armed forces.

Foreign governments and non-governmental actors have a role to play in assisting the government of Colombia in this regard. There should be a level of coordination so that these international programs are most effective in assisting the Colombians and are not directed only at some particular segments of the society.

Pakistan

The Pakistani army is the primary political institution in the country. Reform of the Pakistani security sector – the army, the intelligence services, and the police – is therefore tantamount to reform of the country's political process.

The first critical step in security sector reform may involve the creation of an effective civilian interlocutor for the military. With the old generation of politicians in exile, and the leaders of the radical Islamic parties sidelined or under arrest, there is no remaining credible civilian political leadership in Pakistan. The only civilian groups that retain any credibility are a number of non-governmental organizations that revolve around prominent civilian personalities such as cricketer Imran Khan or human rights advocate Asma Jehangir. President Gen. Musharraf and his backers outside Pakistan should now work towards promoting a "national dialogue" that will involve not just representatives from the military, but also from the key sectors in Pakistani society, particularly business, agriculture, the religious leadership, media, and advocates of human rights and democratic reform.

The army will continue to be an important national institution in Pakistan, and the only one to have the secular discipline necessary to bring the country back from the brink. The long-term challenge that the army will face will not be to develop greater professionalism or better standards of service, but to facilitate the formation of alternative national institutions that can take on its current political roles. A gradual transition away from military rule through a strong civilian presidency rather than a potentially chaotic parliament, as proposed earlier, may give the army leadership the time they need to bring about this profound conceptual evolution.

Another great challenge for Pakistan is to curb and reform its bloated, and at times rogue, intelligence agency. This is one area where Pakistan's international friends – particularly the United States – will have to stand clearly behind military reformers who wish to bring the agency within more manageable parameters. The national dialogue could establish an appropriate role and governing structure for Pakistani intelligence. The US, above all

others, will then have to work closely with Pakistan's military and intelligence community to provide support for this re-structuring. By the same token, US pressure, and the threat of sticks as well as the promise of carrots, will be essential to ensuring good behavior on part of Pakistani intelligence.

Cambodia

Military reform needs to be conducted at least in part in conjunction with civil society reform. Removing a large number of people from a safety net such as the military and leaving them to fend for themselves can create social upheaval, particularly in societies such as Cambodia where formal dispute resolution mechanisms such as the courts are manifestly corrupt. Demobilized soldiers need to be assured that their land will not be illegally seized by corrupt officials or their businesses will not be illegally taxed. If such activities continue unchecked, it is likely they will turn to violence—the only dispute resolution that they have hitherto known.

An accurate database of everyone on the military payroll needs to be compiled. The people then need to be categorized as able-bodied serving soldiers, veterans, disabled and dependants. The able-bodied should remain on the military register and be dealt with under demobilization while the balance should be transferred to a civilian social services department and dealt with there. Funding should be allocated to deal with both groups. In Cambodia 18,000 people have been transferred from the military payroll to the Ministry of Women's and Veteran's affairs—but no extra funding has been allocated to deal with them.

Further, weapons cantonment needs to be an integral part of any demobilization program. Once the demobilization phase is underway there needs to be continual spot checks, audits and follow-up interviews to ensure that the program is on track and being conducted in the manner initially agreed to.

There needs to be a willingness on the part of donors to cease funding and, if need be, cancel programs when collaboration is not forthcoming. Countries such as Cambodia cannot afford to run up debts to enrich a few corrupt politicians, while at the same time squandering opportunities to reform. It would be better to defer such projects until there is the political will to implement them properly.

Central and Eastern Europe, and Russia

The establishment of democratic control of civil-military relations is a key element of the security sector reform agenda in the post-communist countries. Most of the Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries have been successful in establishing the institutional bases for civil authority over the military. Nevertheless, specific

problems remain, such as a lack of parliamentary scrutiny and a preponderance of the military over civilian advisers in defense ministries.

The enlargements of NATO and the EU with CEE countries have to be coordinated more closely with an increased formalization of the "linkages" that already exist between the two institutions. More programs must focus on promoting public engagement in the conduct of military affairs (simultaneously with changing attitudes and emphasizing a democratic culture).

In Russia, emphasis should be put on modernization, professionalization, improved coordination, separation of tasks (specialization), and downsizing rather than structural reform. The need for better separation of tasks and coordination within the security sector, especially between the Armed Forces on the one hand, and Internal Troops and other MVD structures on the other hand, has been most vividly demonstrated in post-conflict settings within Russia (in the North Caucasus). Further specialization of the MVD Troops and special units in post-conflict security tasks, as opposed to military support or regular police functions, should be encouraged. While modernization (in terms of equipment, arms, training and logistics) remains an absolute priority, downsizing should not be viewed as a goal in itself (for MVD and other militarized force structures, this imperative, although important, is less pressing than for the Armed Forces).

Russia's humanitarian relief agency (EMERCOM), the most efficiently organized of all state forces, could be more widely used abroad, especially in cases when Russia's military or peacekeeping involvement is unwelcome, politically problematic and undesirable for Russia itself. This has already been effectively demonstrated by EMERCOM deployment into Kabul (Afghanistan).

Priority should be given to practical cooperation in the field, which is less controversial politically, could be very instructive logistically (in terms of modernization of management, equipment, communications capacities) and might have wider institutional implications. Based on its own experience in the North Caucasus, the UN, for instance, has proposed to the Russian government to create a regional security unit, following the RUBOP/UBOP model (MVD regional units targeting organized crime) and dedicated to UN and associated humanitarian operations in the region.

Liberia/Sierra Leone/South Africa

External actors such as Germany should join the USA, UK and France in the training of post-conflict Armed Forces of Liberia and Sierra Leone. They should assist materially in the demobilization, disarmament and re-integration of ex-combatants, particularly child soldiers. In doing so, they should liaise with prominent NGOs

(such as Save the Children Sweden or Save the Children UK) already working in the region.

Through the UN's Department of Peacekeeping Operations, external governments should assist existing Peace Support Training Centres (PSTCs), such as the one in Kenya, to boost PSO capacity through specific funds to support peacekeeping initiatives in Africa. They should assist in the humanitarian de-mining in Sierra Leone; and sponsor and exchange military officers attending PSO courses either in the existing PSTCs in Africa or elsewhere.

In South Africa, both civilian and military personnel should be involved in the process of defense management. Apart from the political benefits of such a strategy (increased legitimacy and more extensive civil-military dialogue, for example), it also provides for a richer defense product harnessing the competencies of a range of non-military and non-technocratic actors.

Reform should, somewhat self-evidently, provide for the cost-effective management of the security sector. This is often difficult to accomplish given the tension between budgetary constraints on the one hand and an increased demand for services from the security sector on the other. No instant blueprint exists for remedying this tension, but creative approaches can nevertheless be adopted. These may include the implementation of cheaper, and often militarily more effective, defense strategies such as civilian-based defense, doctrines of irregular warfare, and an emphasis on lighter and more mobile, rather than heavier and more technologically sophisticated, armed forces.

Reform should not adversely affect the operational readiness and the institutional capabilities of the armed forces that are being restructured. The success of the transformation process will be measured by the extent to which it maximizes the ability of the institution to deliver its services. Restructuring should provide for the optimal development of human resources during the transformation process. The successful management of the long-term consequences of a security sector transformation process is critically dependent on the policy coherence, competencies, management abilities and transformational leadership qualities within the institution. These are qualities that remain underdeveloped in African governments in general and, to a lesser extent, within the armed forces in particular, and require prioritization if transformation is to prove successful.

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