Chapter 2

Reforming and Reconstructing the Security Sector

Alan Bryden and Heiner Hänggi

Introduction[1]

Developed since the late 1990s, the concept of security sector reform (SSR)[2] increasingly shapes international programmes for development assistance, security cooperation, democracy promotion, and post-conflict peacebuilding. This process is driven by the understanding that an unreformed security sector represents a decisive obstacle to the promotion of sustainable development, democracy and peace. The SSR concept thus bridges those previously separate international discourses of security policy, peace and democracy promotion, and development assistance. These cross-sectoral characteristics make the SSR approach innovative and promising while simultaneously rendering it more demanding in terms of conceptualisation and actual implementation.

For a better understanding of the SSR approach, it is important to distinguish between three very different reform rationales which gave rise to the SSR concept. First, following the end of the Cold War, Western governments – in the framework of their 'new defence diplomacy' – put emphasis, bilaterally as well as through multilateral security institutions such as the OSCE and NATO,[3] on the promotion of democratic civil-military relations in post-communist Central and Eastern Europe. With other multilateral actors coming into the picture, notably the EU and the Council of Europe, this approach soon began to expand to non-military elements of the security sector such as the judiciary, police, and border guards.[4] Second, as a consequence of the increase in intrastate conflict in the 1990s, the development community started to recognise the importance of the security-development nexus and to embrace SSR as an opportunity for development cooperation. Following the lead of the United Kingdom, Western donor countries and multilateral development actors such as the OECD and UNDP

embedded SSR into development assistance policies and programmes.[5] Finally, SSR gained most practical relevance in the context of externally-assisted reconstruction of fragile and failed states as well as states emerging from violent intra- or interstate conflict.[6] Within the UN discourse, SSR – together with disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) and the rule of law – is increasingly viewed as a key to success in post-conflict peacebuilding efforts.[7]

It is the latter SSR rationale – post-conflict peacebuilding – that this chapter considers. The underlying assumption is that SSR in post-conflict settings imposes additional and distinct challenges compared to SSR in other contexts. Thus, security sector reconstruction – that is SSR in post-conflict settings – is viewed as a variation on the broader theme of security sector reform, albeit one of rapidly increasing importance. The chapter starts with a brief conceptualisation and contextualisation of security sector reform in order to lay the foundation for the subsequent discussion of the specific features of SSR in post-conflict peacebuilding. This will be followed by a review of lessons learned thus far from practical cases of security sector reconstruction. The chapter will conclude with a number of policy recommendations drawn from this analysis.

Security Sector Reform – Concept and Context

Although SSR is still an evolving and contested concept, and lessons learned from practical experience are still scarce, SSR has emerged as a key concept which is increasingly accepted – at least in principle – by development practitioners, security experts, democracy advocates, and those engaged in post-conflict peacebuilding. SSR is essentially aimed at the efficient and effective provision of state and human security within a framework of democratic governance. In practical terms, SSR varies substantially according to the specific reform context, three of which will be introduced in this section: developmental, post-authoritarian and post-conflict contexts – each reflecting different rationales for reform. Clarifying these different contexts will open the way for a more detailed discussion of SSR in post-conflict peacebuilding.

The Security Sector from a Governance Perspective

There is no generally accepted definition of what the security sector comprises. Nonetheless, there appears to be a convergence on broad and

narrow notions of the term. The narrow notion reflects a traditional *governmental* approach which is premised upon a state-centric view of security and the state's monopoly of coercive force. Accordingly, the security sector can be considered as the component of the public sector responsible for the provision of internal and external security. It rests on two pillars: (a) the state security (and justice) apparatus, and (b) the relevant civilian bodies responsible for the management and control of that apparatus.[8]

Though still within the confines of the narrow government approach, this definition reflects a broad notion of security for two reasons.[9] First, it does not cover the military alone, but acknowledges the important, and in some countries predominant, role of non-military security forces – either in the provision of security or, on the contrary, as a source of insecurity. Consequently, apart from the armed forces, the state security apparatus includes the police, gendarmerie and paramilitary forces, the intelligence and secret services, border guards and customs authorities, as well as justice and penal institutions. The inclusion of the latter category of actors such as criminal investigation and prosecution regimes, prison services, etc. into the security apparatus reflects the growing importance of internal security issues, particularly in the aftermath of 9/11.

Second, this definition of the security sector adds a normative political dimension in the sense that it posits the state security apparatus as accountable to government authority or – as UN Secretary General Kofi Annan put it – that the security sector 'should be subject to the same standards of efficiency, equity and accountability as any other [public] service'.[10] Consequently, apart from the security apparatus, the security sector includes the elected and duly appointed civil authorities, such as the executive government, the relevant ministries (so-called 'power ministries', particularly the ministries of defence and the interior), the parliament and its specialised committees, as well as the judicial authorities and special oversight bodies such as human rights commissions and ombudsmen. The role of these bodies is to ensure that the security apparatus is managed in an efficient and effective way and is held accountable to current standards of democracy and human rights.

Given the centrality of the security sector as the sole agent of the exercise of legitimate force in the nation-state, there are good reasons to expect that the shift from *government* to *governance* has generally been modest in the security sector.[11] However, this focus on a security sector understood to be confined to state institutions falls short of reality in many countries, in established democracies as well as in developing countries, in

post-authoritarian and post-conflict states. More often than not, non-state actors, armed groups, as well as civil society organisations play an important role in providing, as well as in undermining, security. From a governance perspective, this calls for a broader understanding of the security sector which should include non-statutory security forces and non-statutory civil society groups as well.[12] As will be shown below, this holds particularly true for post-conflict countries.

Given the increasing importance and, particularly in post-conflict cases, the prevalence of private and other non-statutory security actors, armed groups such as guerrilla and liberation armies, irregular paramilitary organisations as well as private armies of warlords, political party militias and mercenaries all have to be considered either part of the *de facto* security sector or at least important actors shaping security sector governance. This also holds true for private military and security companies which have become a key feature of many conflict and post-conflict theatres (see Chapter 3). Finally, again with particular relevance to post-conflict settings, foreign troops may also play a crucial role in the provision of security. Foreign troops impacting on the security sector governance of the host country may take the form of international peace support operations, deployments of allied troops, or even occupying forces.

Furthermore, given the relevance of civil society for democratic governance, non-statutory civil society actors such as the media, non-governmental organisations, research institutions, and community groups may play an important role in the oversight of the security apparatus. They can contribute to the creation of an informed public sensitised to security sector governance issues, and they can provide the state institutions responsible for the management and oversight of the security apparatus with alternative expertise (see Chapter 4).

Considering civil society actors and armed non-state actors as component parts of the security sector in the broad sense helps to transcend its essentially state-centric nature which, in an increasing number of cases, wrongly assumes that the monopoly of the means of legitimate coercion rests solely with the state and its institutions.[13] While necessary from a *governance* perspective, the broadening of the security sector to include non-state actors is much less desirable from a *government* perspective, particularly with regard to armed non-state actors. However, from government and governance perspectives, the limited or, even better, non-involvement of armed non-state actors in security sector governance, and a strong role for civil society actors, is more desirable than not.

The Concept of Security Sector Reform

The point of departure for security sector reform is a dysfunctional security sector, i.e. a security sector which does not provide security to the state and its people in an efficient and effective way or, even worse, which is itself a cause of insecurity and violent conflict. Moreover, in line with the aforementioned normative dimension of SSR, and in view of the fact that non-democratic states may also have efficient and effective security sectors (though primarily for the purpose of regime security), a security sector must be considered dysfunctional if it is deficient in terms of democratic governance. Thus, SSR is meant to turn a dysfunctional security sector into a functional one, thereby reducing security deficits (lack of security or even provision of insecurity) as well as democratic deficits (lack of oversight over the security sector). This double objective of developing an affordable, effective, and efficient security apparatus within a framework of democratic accountability constitutes the uncontested core of the SSR concept.[14]

The SSR agenda favours a holistic approach in a double sense – firstly, by integrating all those partial reforms such as defence reform, police reform, intelligence reform and judicial reform, which in the past were generally seen and conducted as separate efforts; and secondly, by linking measures aimed at increasing efficiency and effectiveness of security forces to overriding concerns of democratic governance. Consequently, it has to be emphasised that reforms aimed to modernise and professionalise security forces without ensuring their democratic accountability are not consistent with the SSR concept as commonly understood. Such activities would fall rather under the heading of technical assistance in the framework of 'old defence diplomacy', which was aimed at beefing up the armed and security forces of allies irrespective of governance considerations.[15] By definition, SSR-related activities must be aimed at improving the governance of the security sector.

Given the scope and complexity of the SSR concept, the range of SSR activities that are recommended and implemented by the actors involved is quite extraordinary. They range from political dialogue, policy and legal advice, training programmes, to technical and financial assistance. Two major categories of reform activities can be distinguished – each reflecting one of the two core elements of SSR:[16]

- First, measures aimed at restructuring the security apparatus. These SSR activities include partial reforms such as military and, more generally, defence reform as well as police reform, intelligence

reform, judicial reform, prison reform, etc. In line with the holistic approach of SSR, it is imperative to link each area of engagement because efforts will not succeed unless complementary work is carried out in other areas. From a security governance perspective, activities aimed at engaging and integrating non-state armed actors into the state security apparatus might also be considered as a part of this category of SSR activities.

- Second, measures aimed at strengthening civilian management and democratic accountability of the security apparatus. These SSR activities include reforms of the relevant ministries and their management capacities (particularly financial management) as well as parliamentary and judicial oversight mechanisms. From a security sector governance perspective, capacity building in favour of specialised civil society actors would also fall into this category of SSR activities.

A third category – specific SSR-related activities addressing the legacies of conflict – will be introduced in the next section. Beyond these broad categories of SSR activities, a number of cross-cutting reform measures must be mentioned because they impact on, or even link, several component parts of the security sector. Such reform measures would include the development of norms, standards and good practices specific to the security sector, the strengthening and adaptation of the constitutional and legal framework of security sector governance as well as comprehensive and inclusive national security reviews as a precondition and catalyst for successful SSR.

Contexts of Security Sector Reform

In practical terms, SSR varies according to the specific reform context. There is general agreement that no common model of SSR exists and that, in principle, each country engaging in SSR constitutes a special case and hence a different reform context. However, for analytical purposes, broad SSR contexts may be distinguished which contain a number of similar cases – depending on the criteria for categorisation. If the level of economic development, the nature of the political system and the specific security situation are used as points of departure, the following three SSR contexts, or rather 'context clusters', emerge as typical – each reflecting a different rationale for reform (see Table 2.1):

- the developmental context in relatively stable developing countries (key criterion: socio-economic development);
- the post-authoritarian – primarily post-communist – context in transition countries (key criterion: political system);
- the post-conflict context in countries engaged in rebuilding the state after conflict (key criterion: security situation).[17]

Relatively good opportunities for externally-assisted SSR activities tend to exist in developing countries which have embarked on a process of democratisation after elections or other forms of peaceful change, in post-authoritarian transition states which aim at joining a regional organisation making democracy a requirement for membership (e.g. potential EU and NATO members), and in those post-conflict states in which international peace support operations offer a basis for reconstruction and local actors show a certain capacity and readiness for reform. In many other cases, however, prospects for externally-assisted SSR are rather dim. In particular, this applies to countries in armed conflict, to fragile and 'post-conflict' states at early stages of conflict transformation, as well as to authoritarian regimes and so-called illiberal democracies where the will to reform is lacking. This does not necessarily mean that SSR should not be promoted in these countries, but that this task will be even more challenging with higher political risks attached than is the case in more conducive environments.

The framing conditions, the nature of external involvement, the specific security sector problems and the challenges and possibilities for SSR may be very different depending on the specific reform context. What all three contexts have in common, however, is that SSR tends to be externally induced. In most cases, external (development and security) actors tend to initiate SSR programmes, fund them to a large extent, and often provide the bulk of expertise needed for implementing these programmes. Where local will for reform is lacking, external actors often facilitate SSR programmes by means of political incentives or pressure. Furthermore, there seems to be a tendency among external actors to promote their own (i.e. 'Western') reform models, which rarely fit the specific SSR context on the ground. In all three reform contexts, there are tensions between external imposition and local ownership of SSR. Finding a balance between international good practice in this area and domestic political culture of reforming states is a *conditio sine qua non* for successful SSR, though, at the same time, this tension is inherent to the SSR concept itself and thus not amenable to easy solutions.

Table 2.1: Contexts of Security Sector Reform[18]

	Developmental context	Post-authoritarian context	Post-conflict context
Key criteria	Socio-economic development	Political system	Security situation
Key problem	Development deficit	Democratic deficit	Security deficit
Key reform objective	Development	Democratisation	Peacebuilding
General reform process	Transition from underdeveloped to developed economy	Transition from authoritarian to democratic system	Transition from armed conflict to sustainable peace
Nature of external involvement	Reform pressure through development assistance coupled with political conditionality	Perspective of accession to regional organisation (e.g. EU, NATO) as incentive for reform	Reform pressure through international (mostly UN-led) peace support operations
Key external actors	Western donor countries; development organisations (e.g. UNDP, World Bank); transnational actors	Western donor countries; international organisations (e.g. EU, NATO, OSCE); transnational actors	Multinational peace troops (mostly UN-led); Western donor countries; UNDP; transnational actors (e.g. NGO, PMC)
Specific security sector problems	Poorly managed and governed security apparatus; excessive military spending; security apparatus partly funding itself through own business activities	Oversized, over-resourced, omni-present security apparatus; civil but no democratic control; strong state but weak civil society	State structures collapsed; very weak civil society; strong presence of armed non-state actors; specific security problems (e.g. small arms, landmines)
Possibilities for SSR	Mixed – depending on political commitment to reform, strength of state institutions, role and state of security apparatus, regional security environment, donor approach to SSR, etc.)	Rather good if external incentives available, e.g. EU membership – strong state institutions, professional security forces, broader democratisation process)	In principle rather poor – weak and contested statehood, privatisation of security – depending on foreign commitment and local readiness to reform

Security Sector Reconstruction – the Post-Conflict Context

Most of the activities currently subsumed under the heading of SSR take place in post-conflict societies emerging from intra- or interstate conflict which are embarking on a process of reconstructing all dysfunctional parts of the public sector. Clearly, engaging in SSR in post-conflict environments poses special challenges, and also presents particular opportunities. On the one hand, SSR seems to be particularly difficult in a post-conflict setting, usually characterised by weak state institutions, a fragile inter-ethnic or political situation, with influential military and non-military security forces, both statutory and non-statutory, and precarious economic conditions. On the other hand, given the external resources made available through post-conflict peace support and peacebuilding interventions, the receptiveness of post-conflict societies to external support for all kinds of reform, even in the most sensitive areas such as the security sector, and the quite obvious need to 'right-size' the security sector and reform or even reconstruct it after the end of the conflict, post-conflict situations are generally viewed as representing 'windows of opportunity' for SSR programmes. However, this does not necessarily apply to cases where an interstate war or foreign military intervention aimed at regime change and resulting in transitional occupation preceded post-conflict peacebuilding efforts, because the ensuing security environment may simply be too adverse.

Post-Conflict SSR as a Challenge of Security Governance

From a governance perspective, post-conflict peacebuilding reflects highly complex constellations of interaction. A multitude of actors, particularly armed non-state actors such as international peace support forces, transnational private military companies (PMCs) and local non-statutory armed groups, must be taken into account. Also, post-conflict peacebuilding takes place on several levels of engagement beyond, above and below the state level. This is evidenced by the fact that post-conflict theatres are characterised by two distinct features which represent additional challenges for SSR: the privatisation and the internationalisation of security, which tends to be much greater in post-conflict cases than in the other contexts discussed above.

Post-conflict settings are more often than not characterised by the strong presence of armed non-state actors whose political ambitions and economic stakes will have to be taken into account in post-conflict peacebuilding. Furthermore, the former conflict parties, as well as the

international forces tasked to keep the peace, may have hired the services of PMCs which have their own stake in post-conflict peacebuilding. Efforts aimed at stabilising the security situation immediately after conflict tend to conspicuously ignore these armed non-state actors. This may impact negatively on the long-term objectives of peacebuilding, which include the reestablishment of the state monopoly on the legitimate use of force. The 'privatisation' of security in post-conflict settings tends to be contrasted by the absence of strong civil society actors who could engage in increasing public pressure for the demilitarisation and deprivatisation of security. The combination of a strong involvement of armed non-state actors and a weak role for civil society bodes ill for security sector governance. However, it is a distinct feature of post-conflict environments and, thus, a specific challenge for security sector reconstruction.

International intervention is the rule of post-conflict peacebuilding rather than the exception. In most cases, a transitional administration under the auspices of the UN or other international institutions, supported by the military strength of an international peace support operation, has to reimpose some sort of a monopoly of coercive force and step in as a provisional government – often for a considerably longer period of time than initially expected. The activities of intervening military forces tend to influence the development of a new national security apparatus and the implementation of specific post-conflict SSR-related measures such as DDR, SALW programmes and mine action. Peacekeepers may even engage in capacity-building activities aimed at strengthening civilian management, parliamentary oversight and the role of civil society in security sector governance. The 'internationalisation' of security in post-conflict settings tends to be contrasted with a shortage of local capacity and, thus, by a lack of local ownership in post-conflict peacebuilding because physical security will have to be provided by international actors while sufficient local capacity is gradually being developed – a process which can be very lengthy. As mentioned above, finding a balance between external imposition and local ownership of SSR is a particularly challenging, but nevertheless crucial, task in the post-conflict context.

Specific Objectives of Post-Conflict SSR

SSR in post-conflict settings – security sector *reconstruction* – follows the same two key principles as SSR in other contexts, namely (re-)establishing security forces which are able to provide public security in an effective and efficient manner and within a framework of democratic governance. What

makes security sector reconstruction different from security sector reform, however, is the fact that it must deal with the legacy of past armed conflict. This may include armed non-state groups that need to be disbanded or integrated into new force structures; oversized armed forces that need to be downsized; former combatants (including child soldiers) that need to be disarmed, demobilised and reintegrated; surplus weapons that need to be removed; landmines and unexploded ordnance that need to be cleared; transitional legal regimes that need to be implemented; large numbers of perpetrators that need to be prosecuted; widespread trafficking in human beings that needs to be combated, etc. These legacies all have in common that, to a greater or lesser extent, they relate to the security sector and impact the conditions for security sector reform.

Consequently, apart from restructuring – or reconstructing – the security apparatus and strengthening – or establishing – civilian control and democratic accountability, SSR in post-conflict peacebuilding has to tackle a third objective, namely to address this broader category of related reform and reconstruction activities.[19] Thus, more often than not, disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of former combatants, measures against proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons as well as mine action, rule of law and transitional justice, and anti-trafficking programmes are viewed as components of SSR in post-conflict peacebuilding, but not necessarily of SSR in developmental and post-authoritarian contexts (see parts III and IV of this book). Needless to say given the broader range of core tasks, security sector reconstruction is even more challenging than 'standard' SSR in developmental and post-authoritarian contexts.

Lessons from Post-Conflict SSR

The relationship of SSR to the multi-actor, multi-level dynamics of post-conflict peacebuilding processes is inherently complex. Relatively few dedicated SSR programmes have been enacted to date in post-conflict contexts, but a range of activities that fall within the scope of post-conflict SSR can be traced within past and ongoing post-conflict peacebuilding efforts. This section seeks to highlight briefly a number of lessons from the international community's practical experience in SSR in different post-conflict settings and how security sector reconstruction relates to the broader security governance challenges in states emerging from conflict. Consequently, four key themes are considered: the *framing conditions* or specific contexts for security sector reconstruction; the role and influence of

external actors; the challenges and dilemmas of fostering *local ownership*, and, finally, the *sequencing* of related activities.

Framing Conditions

The collapse of political and societal institutions, and a breakdown of the rule of law, are common to all contexts of post-conflict reconstruction. The post-conflict landscape generally includes a wide availability of weapons, refugees and internally displaced persons and porous borders, exacerbating the openings for organised crime. Post-conflict security actors may be characterised by politicisation, ethnicisation and corruption, uncontrolled spending, a lack of professionalism and poor oversight. The vacuum left by a deficient state security sector risks being filled by a range of non-statutory actors with their own aims and agendas. Bringing such actors under civilian and democratic control through restoring the state's monopoly on the use of force is therefore a critical peacebuilding challenge.

Beyond these general framing conditions, knowledge of the specific reform and reconstruction context is essential in order to inform external interventions and avoid embedding divisions in reconstructed security sectors. From a *security* perspective, the type of conflict, its duration and the level of violence have serious consequences for the willingness of stakeholders to cooperate. Persistent factionalism, an ethnic or religious dimension to the conflict, and the level of civilian involvement in hostilities all contribute to residual hostility that will need to be considered – as shown by the failure of peacebuilding in Somalia – in the formulation and implementation of security sector reconstruction programmes if security and sustainable peace are to be achieved.

The *political* context, taking into account the nature and extent of political development prior to the conflict, is equally pertinent to the shape of security sector reconstruction programmes as they are conceived and implemented. Different opportunities appear in reconstructing security in states characterised by strongly centralised dictatorial regimes – such as Iraq – in comparison to a feudal system with much power held by regional stakeholders as in Afghanistan. In particular, the opportunities to reconstruct the security sector will be conditioned by the characteristics of the pre-conflict security sector which in many such cases would have been regime-focused and weakly governed. Importantly though, the previous political dispensation, as well as a range of other contextual factors such as religion, will deeply colour local actors' expectations for reconfigured governance structures. The regional political context for security sector reconstruction

must also be taken into account given the range of transnational security threats and the potential for neighbours to act as spoilers.

Finally, the *socio-economic* context will have a direct bearing on openings for security sector reconstruction. States with higher standards of living are more likely to achieve long-lasting peace. However, States that are the subject of peacebuilding efforts tend to be characterised by limited social and economic capital, including reliance on economic and food assistance, coupled with an absence of infrastructure and skills. These factors, exacerbated by long-standing governance deficits, represent significant barriers to security sector reconstruction.

These security, political and socio-economic histories are interrelated, deeply engrained, and can only be influenced to a certain extent by external actors. They therefore represent an essential dimension, alongside external involvement and local capacity, of the available political space for building peace.[20] Domestic characteristics and root causes are therefore highly relevant to the scope and possibilities for successful SSR even when external actors have substantial political and military strength. As discussed below, to achieve sustainable results, security sector reconstruction projects should be firmly grounded in these local realities even though these realities can represent as much a part of the problem as a part of the solution.

External Involvement

Addressing security sector governance issues before windows of opportunity close – either as a result of suboptimal governance practices becoming embedded or, at worst, a return to conflict – is essential. While post-conflict contexts do not represent a blank canvas for reform and reconstruction, the near collapse of state structures represents a chance for thorough change not necessarily found in other reform settings. The resources and commitment of dedicated external actors have been a critical factor in furthering the security and development goals of post-conflict peacebuilding efforts. However, with regard to security sector reconstruction, a number of valid concerns should be highlighted regarding both the policy dimension and the practical consequences of such interventions.

Key external actors may include a combination of peacekeeping forces, transitional administrations, development and donor agencies as well as relevant NGOs and commercial companies. Regional actors such as the EU or Economic Community of West African States can play a key role in providing linkages to international organisations as well as a local knowledge and commitment that these larger actors do not have. At the

policy level, external approaches to SSR have frequently lacked coordination or have been shaped by domestic experiences that do not apply to other reform contexts. In processes involving a combination of actors, there is a consequent need for more joined up approaches by the various external actors involved in SSR in order to ensure policy coherence. On the ground, challenges to coordination are mirrored by problems in cooperation generated by organisations with overlapping mandates but contrasting priorities and approaches.

Engaging in SSR in post-conflict settings requires a long-term commitment by external actors. This requires a sustained resource flow although resources are not enough – as demonstrated by the continued failure of SSR in Haiti despite major pledges from the US, France and Canada, among others.[21] Even more important is a political will to sustain involvement until national actors are mature enough to assume responsibility for their own security sector governance. If this does not happen, then unfulfilled expectations of local actors can have significant repercussions on the wider goals of the peacebuilding process. Political 'exit strategies' need to be replaced by 'transfer strategies' keyed to realistic and durable benchmarks. This dilemma is evident in Iraq where achieving security sector reconstruction goals is being impeded by the inability of the US-led coalition, in conjunction with reconstituted Iraqi security forces, to provide a basic level of security as a precondition for the provision of services or rebuilding the economy.[22]

Legitimacy is also essential for external intervention. The continued insurgency in Iraq also demonstrates both the inadequacy of external military power as a force for change, and the role that perceived illegitimacy can have in strengthening those groups opposing new governance structures. In contrast, the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) successfully oversaw the resettling of over 100,000 refugees and internally displaced persons, the building of a civil administration from scratch, the holding of free and fair elections, and the emergence of an independent nation after centuries of Portuguese colonial rule, followed by military occupation by Indonesia and extreme violence. Critically, this startling success was underpinned by credible security guarantees and an international presence that was welcomed openly by the local population.[23]

The nature of the contributions provided by external actors must be tailored to the specific needs of the given reform context. Military personnel have often been at the forefront of the international community's SSR programming. However military skills sets, while appropriate to activities such as defence reform, do not necessarily lend themselves to developing

governance frameworks or building capacity in local actors. Conversely, development actors, who are more exposed to the challenges of capacity building, have been reluctant to engage in the security field. What is required, as described by Brzoska and Heinemann-Grüder, is 'a multidisciplinary approach involving legal and constitutional experts, military and police professionals, experts in human resources management, persons and agencies with experience in demobilisation, re-trainers and labour market experts'.[24]

The potentially negative impact of external actors on post-conflict societies must also be acknowledged in order to be minimised as much as possible. There is a danger of causing a 'dependency culture' which creates 'de facto multilateralist states' that leave nothing behind when international support is withdrawn.[25]

Local Ownership

The importance of 'local ownership' to successful security sector reconstruction has become so widely acknowledged as to become a truism. The difficulty lies in implementing measures which enshrine this principle when the ability to implement change resides essentially with external actors. However the importance of societal reform mirroring institutional developments cannot be overstated in States with long legacies of weak or authoritarian governance. In general terms, local ownership, understood as an expression of national will, is essential for SSR. Local actors need to be involved in security sector reconstruction processes from the outset in order gradually to build local capacity and allow for the eventual handover of responsibility from external actors, as difficult as this may be. Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina are two examples where externally-imposed SSR has not proved conducive to sustainable reform.

Local ownership also requires societal, as well as institutional, re-positioning in order to restore faith in armed and security forces in post-conflict states. Consultation and discussion therefore represent important mechanisms for surmounting the historical legacies of recently reformed security sector institutions. Civil society involvement in reconstructing the security sector is intended to narrow such gaps between security institutions, newly-elected political authorities and the populace, building confidence through demystifying a sector traditionally characterised by secrecy. It is also an effective means of moving away from donor-driven SSR perspectives. Support for research institutes, media organisations, and other

civil society actors focusing on security issues can increase the space for debate on SSR issues.

Local capacity should be considered as a practical rather than aspirational or normative goal. Compatibility of new structures and mechanisms with available long-term resources is essential for sustainability. More broadly, moving from the absence of war to stable peace is untenable without taking into account issues of capacity, leadership and participation. This is reflected in the case of Sierra Leone, generally seen as a positive example of an SSR process led by one committed external actor. However, there is concern that the high quality of training and equipment provided by the British cannot be sustained once support is reduced and full responsibility returned to national actors, which may weaken morale and may dampen other reform activities.[26] In another context, US support for regional powerbrokers in Afghanistan may have helped in the military struggle against the Taliban, but has been counterproductive in terms of strengthening central government in Afghanistan. Beyond obvious 'peace spoilers', the misguided support of 'uncivil society' also includes organisations set up with the goal of accruing donor funding as, for example, in Bosnia and Herzegovina (see Chapter 4). Building the proper kinds of local capacity, ensuring that organisations are genuinely representative and accountable, is therefore critical.

Sequencing of Reforms

A broad conceptualisation of SSR is important in order to map the range of related actors and issues that security sector reconstruction processes are designed to address. However, such approaches may result in 'laundry lists' which provide little concrete guidance for planning interventions. How SSR efforts are sequenced is key to long-term sustainability of reform. Although basic security is a precondition for SSR, if security is achieved solely through external actors or at the expense of the human rights of citizens, then long-term stability cannot be achieved. Consequently, SSR must go hand in hand with a broader democratic transformation of the country's political and legal system. However, it is also important to note that while democratisation is an important precondition for SSR, the relationship between democratisation and democratic governance of the security sector is less clear. In the West African sub-region, democratic openings in a number of States have occurred in the context of security sectors that remain geared towards the security of the regime in power rather than the security of all of its citizens.[27]

In the ideal case, security sector reconstruction should emerge from a restated national security policy that includes such sectoral policies as defence and intelligence. Higher-level policy reform should form the basis of constitutional and legal reform which reinforces democratic control and shapes the roles and functions of security organisations. This should be mirrored by compatible personnel and resource management structures that are transparent and accountable. These steps, which should be supported by effective and regular evaluation procedures, cannot take place in the absence of viable national capacity, and should therefore be a key focus of donor assistance. In the reality of the early post-conflict period, this ideal model must be set against the immediate goals of rebuilding state capacity to address security threats.

Security sector reconstruction is directly and indirectly linked to the range of security governance challenges that need to be addressed as part of post-conflict peacebuilding. The governance dimension of the SSR concept provides a thread which links security issues where the military aspect is only one dimension such as DDR and SALW, to political security issues like engaging armed non-state groups and to societal security issues such as transitional justice or human trafficking. Pursuing these linkages in policy and programming terms is essential in order to address the consequences of coordination and cooperation problems, as well as to inform priority-setting in current and future interventions.

An important aspect of sequencing lies in determining how and when to return responsibility to local actors. Political deadlines and exit strategies are antithetical to meaningful reconstruction, with engagement being the key to meaningful results. Early withdrawal of external support undermines opportunities to embed sustainable locally-owned security sector institutions and oversight mechanisms.

Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

The increasing application of the SSR concept by a range of international actors is evidence of the growing awareness that SSR is an essential element in addressing a number of security and development goals. This chapter has considered the SSR concept in the particular context of post-conflict peacebuilding where it is situated as an essential requirement among the governance challenges of states emerging from conflict. Such contexts are inherently complex, combining external intervention with the long-term goal of states reassuming responsibility for their own security.

Experience in implementing SSR as part of post-conflict peacebuilding efforts has demonstrated the importance of context in shaping external interventions and optimising opportunities for capacity-building among local actors. The international community now has significant experience in assisting the reconstruction of states following armed conflict, and lessons can be identified and, more importantly, applied, which should help to shape future interventions. The following recommendations are therefore proposed:

- Enhancing governance capacity should not be considered an option in the security dimension of the reconstruction effort. Without investing in oversight mechanisms, the key requirement of sustainable, locally-owned reform cannot be achieved.
- As difficult or seemingly counterproductive as it may seem in the short-term, participative reform processes involving a range of local actors are critical in order to embed reform in wider societal structures. The building of local capacity should therefore support the full range of activities led by external actors.
- International actors must intervene swiftly, but be prepared for extended involvement both in political and financial terms. However, advantages gained through political commitment and resources will be undermined if interventions lack legitimacy. Linking interventions to the provisions of peace agreements or broader international mandates are therefore very significant.
- Sequencing of security sector reconstruction needs to reflect realities on the ground and should be based on comprehensive needs assessments. In particular, transfer strategies to local actors must be founded on objective criteria relating to the feasibility of such measures.
- SSR is part of wider reform efforts and must be linked to other elements of the peacebuilding process. At the strategic level this means that coordination mechanisms should be simplified and key goals agreed upon by donors, international organisations and other major actors. On the ground, cooperation strategies must be based on information sharing and the selection of 'fit to task' human and technical resources. Developing a framework that better integrates these activities could have considerable benefit for coordination and priority setting at the strategic level and in the field.

This chapter has sought to clarify the SSR concept and its specific application to post-conflict peacebuilding. The lessons which come from this analysis are therefore applicable to a wide range of stakeholders. In particular, the UN has a central role in policy-setting, coordination and implementation – and the new Peacebuilding Commission may serve as its primary instrument. Bilateral donors as well as international and regional actors also have a clear responsibility to coordinate SSR interventions and further develop the linkages between SSR and other aspects of the peacebuilding agenda. But the key responsibility for SSR rests with local actors. SSR can only be achieved in post-conflict contexts if a genuine transformation is achieved that sets the security of citizens above partisan interests or regime loyalties. Embedding such a transformation in the agencies and actors responsible for the provision of security and its oversight is a fundamental condition for sustainable post-conflict peacebuilding.

Notes

1. This chapter draws on earlier publications by the authors, including Bryden A., 'Understanding Security Sector Reform and Reconstruction', Bryden A., Hänggi, H. (eds.), *Reform and Reconstruction of the Security Sector* (Lit: Münster, 2004), pp. 259-275; Hänggi, H., 'Conceptualising Security Sector Reform and Reconstruction', Bryden, A., Hänggi, H. (eds.), *op. cit.*, pp. 3-18; Hänggi, H., 'Sicherheitssektorreform (SSR) – Konzept und Kontexte', *Sicherheit und Frieden/Security and Peace* no. 3 (2005, forthcoming); Hänggi, H., Tanner, F., 'Promoting security sector governance in the EU's neighbourhood', *Chaillot Paper* no. 80 (EU Institute for Security Studies: Paris, 2005).

2. 'Security sector reform' is the term of choice in this chapter because it is most commonly used by practitioners as well as analysts. Reference is made, however, to alternative terms such as 'security system reform', used by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD); 'justice and security sector reform', introduced by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); and 'security sector transformation', which is increasingly being used in the African context to underline the need for fundamental change in governance processes in the security sector. – For an overview of the earlier literature on the SSR concept see Hänggi, H.., 'Conceptualising', *op. cit.*, pp. 16-17.

3. See, for instance, Cottey, A., Forster, A., 'Reshaping Defence Diplomacy. New Roles for Military Cooperation and Assistance', *Adelphi Paper* no. 365 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2004), pp. 31-40.

4. Hänggi, H., Tanner, F., *op. cit.*, pp. 25-42.

5. See, for instance, Brzoska, M., 'Development Donors and the Concept of Security Sector Reform', *DCAF Occasional Paper* no. 4 (Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces: Geneva, 2003).

6. See, for instance, Bryden, A., Hänggi, H., *op. cit.*, particularly chapters in part III.

7 United Nations Security Council, *Statement by the President of the Security Council,* UN Doc. **S**/PRST/2005/30 (12 July 2005). See also Chapter 1.

8 For an authoritative definition of the security sector in the narrow sense see Informal DAC Task Force on Conflict, Peace and Development Co-operation*, Security Issues and Development Co-operation: A Conceptual Framework for Enhancing Policy Coherence* (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development: Paris, 2000), p. 8.

9 For a discussion of the broad notion of security see Chapter 1.

10 Annan, K., *Peace and Development – One Struggle, Two Fronts*, Address of the United Nations Secretary General to World Bank Staff (19 October 1999), p. 5.

11 For a discussion of the shift from *government* to *governance* see Chapter 1.

12 For authoritative definitions of the security sector in the broad sense see UNDP (2002), p. 87; OECD DAC, *DAC Guidelines and Reference Series: Security System Reform and Governance* (OECD DAC: Paris, 2005), pp. 20-21, available at URL <www.oecd.org/dataoecd/8/39/31785288.pdf>.

13 See Wulf, H., 'Internationalisierung und Privatisierung von Krieg und Frieden', *BICC/DCAF Schriften zu Sicherheitssektor und Konversion* no. 11 (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2005).

14 According to the OECD DAC, security sector reform 'seeks to increase partner countries' ability to meet security needs in their societies in a manner consistent with democratic norms and sound principles of governance, transparency and the rule of law'. OECD DAC, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

15 These attempts are not unusual as noted in a recently published report of the OECD DAC: 'In this context, there is a danger that traditional security-related programmes be simply re-labelled as SSR without a serious review of their contents to ensure that they support a governance-oriented approach to the security system.' OECD DAC, *op. cit.*, pp. 25-26.

16 For a systematic catalogue of SSR activities see Hänggi, H., Tanner, F., *op. cit.*, annexe V.

17 One should, however, be aware that highly developed countries, consolidated democracies and states which are internally and externally secure also face pressures to reform their security sectors, particularly in response to new security requirements accentuated by 9/11 and its aftermath or to deficiencies in international security governance related to the effects of globalisation. These pressures are not specific to a given reform context but are more generally applicable.

18 This table, though revised and updated, is drawn from Hänggi, H., 'Conceptualising', *op. cit.*, p. 10.

19 Ball, N., 'Reforming Security Sector Governance', *Conflict, Security & Development* vol. 4, no. 3 (December 2004); Hänggi, H., 'Conceptualising', *op. cit.*, pp. 9, 14.

20 Doyle and Sambanis characterise these three dimensions as a 'peacebuilding triangle' in which positive support is required along each dimension but, importantly, more of one element can substitute to an extent for deficiencies in other areas. Doyle, M.W., Sambanis, N., 'Building Peace: Challenges and Strategies After Civil War', The World Bank Group, 1999, p.15.

21 Law, D., 'Security Sector Reconstruction in Conflict and Post-Conflict Settings', Brzoska, M., Law, D. (eds.), *Security Sector Reform in Peace Support Operations* (2006, forthcoming).

22 See: Slocombe, W., 'Iraq's Special Challenge: Security Sector Reform "Under Fire"', Bryden, A., Hänggi, H. (eds.), *op. cit.*, pp. 232-255.
23 See: Hood, L., 'Security Sector Reform in Timor-Leste', Brzoska, M., Law, D. (eds.), *op. cit.*
24 Brzoska, M., Heinemann-Grüder, A., 'Security Sector Reform and Post-Conflict Reconstruction Under International Auspices', Bryden, A., Hänggi, H. (eds.), *op. cit.*, pp. 121-142 (136).
25 Cawthra, G., Luckham, R., *Governing Insecurity* (London: Zed, 2003), p. 325.
26 Bryden, A., N'Diaye, B., Olonisakin, F., 'Democratising Security Sector Governance in West Africa: Trends and Challenges,' *Conflict, Security and Development* vol. 5, no. 2 (August 2005), pp. 203-226 (221).
27 For an analysis of the relationship between democratisation and security sector governance in the West African sub-region see: Bryden, A., N'Diaye, B., Olonisakin, F., *op. cit.*, pp. 203-226.