

Evaluating International Partnerships in Security Sector Reform in Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Peacemaking¹

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One of the key challenges arising from the recent increase in international involvement in post-conflict situations has been to establish and/or reform security sectors in partnership between external and internal actors. While there is no lack of prescriptions for security partnerships, there has been little analysis of past efforts. The author suggests a list of criteria for the evaluation of success and failure of security sector reconstruction and reform in post-conflict situations. He also describes various dilemmas for external actors and concludes with a hypothesis on how the behaviour of external actors influences success and failure of security sector reconstruction and reform.

¹ This text builds upon earlier work, in particular an article published in *International Peacekeeping*, No. 1/2006, S. 1-13.. and an article co-authored with Andreas Heinemann-Grüder published in Alan Bryden and Heiner Hänggi (eds.), *Reform and Reconstruction of the Security Sector*, Münster: LitVerlag, 2004, pp.121-141.

Following violent conflict and military interventions, international organizations, foreign governments and external private organisations increasingly engage in post-conflict reconstruction. Part of the international post-conflict agenda is the reconstruction or reform of the security sector (SSR). In post-conflict situations, the security sector is often characterised by politicization, ethnicization and corruption of the security services; excessive military spending; lack of professionalism; poor oversight and inefficient allocation of resources. The term ‘reconstruction of the security sector’ pertains to the need to rebuild domestic public security institutions and to reestablish a legitimate monopoly on force. The term ‘reform’ highlights the necessary or desired changes to governing principles and procedures of domestic security institutions, particularly with respect to ‘soft’ issues, such as democratic civilian oversight and the monitoring of human rights.

Internal actors are likewise involved in security sector reconstruction and reform in post-conflict situations. However, they may or may not have common interest. While generally it can be assumed that with the end of major armed conflict, the majority of domestic actors will have an interest in post-conflict security transition agenda, focusing on the prevention of renewed conflict, establishment of rule of law, democratization, and sustainable development, some may be worried about losing positions of power and influence through changes brought about in the security sector.

It is a common understanding in the security sector reform literature that external actors cannot succeed if they attempt to perform it by themselves.² They need local partners. Furthermore, the objective of security sector reform is that it should be driven by local actors. Generally, post-conflict security sector reconstruction and reform will go through stages, with a stronger influence of external actors in the early stages and a stronger influence of domestic actors in the later stages. Eventually, security sector reconstruction and reform needs to come under full domestic ‘ownership’. Throughout, the relationship between external and internal actors is supposed to be a partnership of actors who have a common interest in a particular

² See e.g., Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC), Security System Reform and Governance, Paris, 2004; United Nations General Assembly/Security Council, Securing peace and development: the role of the United Nations in supporting security sector reform, Report of the Secretary-General, 23 January 2008, A/62/659-S/2008/39.

outcome and invest resources to achieve this outcome, definitorial criteria for a multistakeholder partnership.³

Unfortunately, security sector reconstruction and reform inhabit a policy area where the need for action is not concomitant with sound advice. While much has lately been produced in terms of suggestions for instruments and policies, there is still very little knowledge about the effects of priorities and sequencing in particular constellations. In this vein, post-conflict situations are particularly useful in accumulating knowledge about the application of instruments and policies of security sector reconstruction and reform, as the international community occupies a strong position to apply recently designed recipes for partnership in security sector reconstruction and reform.

The Concept of Security Sector Reform

Security sector reform (SSR) is a relatively new catchword, originally introduced by development donors.⁴ Beginning in the late 1990s, a comprehensive approach to the security sector began to be propagated by some development donors, international organizations and consultants working in international affairs. The propagation of a holistic approach to security sector reform, with the full range of objectives and covering all security sector institutions⁵ is sound in theory but problematic in practice. The major disadvantage of the holistic approach is that it is not very helpful for making decisions about policy priorities or sequencing. Decisions on priorities and the sequencing of steps, however, often need to be made. External players, for instance, may be pressed to provide security, even though this is detrimental to improving domestic control over security forces.

SSR has three major objectives:

1. First, SSR is charged with the provision of security. This pertains to the protection from and prevention of political violence by state or non-state elements (such as criminal and militant opposition groups), which are a major

³ EU Multipart, FINAL REPORT ON WP 2&3, http://www.multipart.eu/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=77&Itemid=113.

⁴ Michael Brzoska, Development Donors and the Concept of Security Sector Reform, DCAF Occasional Papers 4, Geneva: Geneva Center for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, Nov. 2003.

⁵ See e.g. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC), Security System Reform and Governance, Paris, 2004.

problem of most post-conflict situations, particularly those with international presence. Linked to this provision of physical security, which primarily involves the police and the military, is the proper functioning of the courts and the prison system as well as small arms control.

2. A second plank is ensuring the prevalence of certain norms in the delivery of security, particularly with respect to governance and the rule of law. The key norms of security sector governance are transparency, accountability and professionalism. As an element of accountability, security institutions have to be brought within the realm of the rule of law. Other issues which affect the conditions of governance include representative ethnic composition of security forces, as well as the eradication of clientelism and corruption.
3. Finally, security sector institutions need to perform effectively and efficiently. In many post-war cases there is a need to de-militarise, e.g., to reduce the number and size of armed forces and align military expenditures with economic means.

The measures to attain these objectives of security sector reconstruction and reform can be grouped into three clusters:

1. the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and transformation of all kinds of armed forces as well as the prosecution of illegally armed non-state players in order to reestablish a state monopoly on the use of justifiable force;
2. the creation of new security sector institutions where none exist, or preventing the reemergence of repressive state security institutions from intervening into politics, economy, and society;
3. the long-term goals of building up accountable, efficient and effective security forces.

To achieve these objectives, actors can use a wide spectrum of instruments, such as (a) strengthening civilian and democratic participation and control ('the primacy of the civil'), (b) reallocating military (material, economic and human) resources for civilian ends ('conversion', 'demilitarization' and control of military spending), (c) reforming military and police institutions to perform specific tasks (professionalization, capacity building), (d) developing an independent judiciary and a humane penal system and (e) undertaking security analyses and creating policy models.

While the security sector reform debate has clearly widened the agenda for reconstruction and reform beyond the military, which earlier was often seen as the

only relevant institution, there is no unanimous view as to how far this label should be stretched. A narrow definition of the security sector focuses on the provision of *public* security, encompassing all organizations and agencies authorised to threaten or use violence in order to protect the state, its citizens or its external environment. A more extensive understanding of the term SSR includes all potential players, institutions, policies and contextual factors affecting security. In this broader version, SSR exemplifies a thrust for good governance, that is transparent, accessible, accountable, efficient, equitable and democratic processes of policy decision-making and – implementation. Accordingly, the concept covers all institutions and elements that in one way or another determine, implement or control the provision of public security or are able to undermine it.

Elements of what is generally regarded as falling under the security sector reform agenda soon also became an issue for peace support operations.⁶ The objectives of massive international interventions, including military forces, in conflict and post-conflict situations have expanded over time, both in number and depth. Interventions have become broader in scope and longer in duration. Earlier interventions, authorized to back-up ceasefires, such as in Somalia, or to support political settlements, such as in Mozambique and Cambodia, were primarily aimed at restoring order and facilitating elections. The demobilization and disarmament of combatants was an early harbinger of wider efforts towards security sector reconstruction and reform within peace support operations. In parallel, but generally with little coordination, development agencies began to operate in the areas of public and human security.

More recent interventions have become very ambitious, attempting to lay the groundwork for sustainable political, economic and security structures. Elements of this expanded interventionism include: stabilization, post-war reconstruction, economic rehabilitation, democratization and security sector reform.

External contributions to security sector reform have been made within a range of circumstances, including where international agreements adopted following the cessation of armed conflict provided a corresponding mandate (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia), where the UN Security Council provided such a mandate

⁶ See e.g., United Nations, Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, chaired by Lakhdar Brahimi, New York, UN doc, A/55/305 – S/2000/809, 21 Aug. 2000.

for international interim administrations (Afghanistan, Kosovo, Sierra Leone), and where a ceasefire, mediated and/or backed by international actors, put an end to collectively organized and/or large-scale armed conflict (for example, in Tajikistan, Nagorno-Karabakh and Northern Ireland). Security sector reform has, of course, also been attempted in other circumstances. For instance, the support of local initiatives by development donor countries, focusing on administrative reforms, and this rather limited experience, has been incorporated into the wider security sector reform agenda.⁷ Currently, the security sector reform debate reflects a disparity characterised by a long list of general recommendations of what could and should be done, on one side, and a shorter list of concrete suggestions based on a thorough analysis of the problems in a particular post-conflict situation on the other side.

External and Internal Actors in Security Sector Reform and Reconstruction

In post-conflict situations, security sector reconstruction and reform needs to initially focus on activities aimed at reducing public insecurity and restore the state monopoly on the legitimate use of violence. Priorities for SSR often differ between the early post-conflict period and later democratic consolidation. Early-stage SSR is generally primarily concerned with containing the spread of violence, emergency stabilization, eliminating the remnants of violence (mostly in the form of disarmament and other measures to contain the spread of small arms and light weapons, as well as demobilization and reintegration of combatants), preventing a return to violence, and the formation of basic security agencies. In many cases, the first task is reconstruction – or, in the case of new states, construction – of the security sector.

The message of much of the security sector reform literature is that democratic oversight of and control over the security sector is important even in such cases.⁸ However, internal partners during this period often are, the former conflict partners, and often not democratically legitimized.

However, the link between democratization, generally pursued as a priority project in post-conflict situations, and security sector reform is complex. In a way,

⁷ Saferworld/International Alert/Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael', 'Towards a Better Practice Framework in Security Sector Reform. Broadening the Debate', Occasional SSR Paper No.1, The Hague, 2002.

security sector reform and democratization reflect the chicken-and-egg problem. Holding elections, drafting constitutions and establishing democratic governments-traditional priorities of the international community in post-conflict stabilization-should, in theory, provide the institutions to hold security sectors accountable. In practice, however, this is often not the case. For instance, in a number of recent cases, such as Bosnia-Herzegovina and in Central Asia, security sector reform has been pushed forward despite visible deficiencies in the democratization process.

Democratic consolidation may require a comprehensive, mutually reinforcing combination of human rights, rule of law, development, and multi-party political competition. Regardless of differences among students of democratization, democratic consolidation usually includes constitutionalism (formal democratic principles), institutional consolidation (formation of democratic institutions), representative consolidation (formation and empowerment of democratic non-state players), and normative or behavioural consolidation (internalization of democratic norms and values).⁹ Disputes exist with respect to the necessary prerequisites: pre-existing statehood, rule of law, a Weberian bureaucracy, secularism, literacy, urbanism, and a certain distribution of income between social strata. SSR in post-conflict situations is not yet concerned with the agenda of democratic consolidation.

Post-conflict Situations: Objectives and Assumptions

Recommendations for security sector reconstruction and reform come from a variety of sources, ranging from peacekeepers to development donors and analysts, each representing various opinions. The result is a mixed bag of policy prescriptions and an ever longer list of suggested instruments with little direction as to priorities.

However, a common theme for all these recommendations is providing security for the citizens living in a given state. This is generally defined as the provision of physical security as well as the control of those institutions providing security ensuring that they actually protect the citizens, not just select groups, and that

⁸ See e.g. Heiner Hänggi, 'Making Sense of Security Sector Governance', Heiner Hänggi, Theodor H. Winkler (eds), *Challenges of Security Sector Governance*, Münster: Lit Verlag, 2003, pp. 3-23.

⁹ See e.g. David Collier and Dan Levitsky, 'Democracy with Adjectives: Conceptual Innovation in Comparative Research', *World Politics*, Vol.49, No.3, 1997,.

they do not actually infringe on the rights of citizens.¹⁰ Physical security is generally seen as an element of human security. In some definitions of human security it is the core element, in others it is a major element. Broad conceptions of human security have the advantage to bring in important considerations for the shaping of security sector reconstruction and reform, in particular pertaining to its opportunity costs¹¹.

Post-conflict situations are typically marked by major inadequacies in providing physical security. Typical examples of insecurity include organised crime and illegal paramilitary organizations, trafficking in drugs and weapons, the unregulated possession of firearms, terrorism and violent extremism and the abuse of power by state security apparatuses.

Solving the security problem is generally perceived to be a prerequisite for development and democratization. In peace support operations the burden of providing security initially will fall on the international community. Post-conflict situations generally lack proper governance structures, including democratically legitimised institutions. The creation and reform of such institutions is another key task in post-conflict situations.

But the corresponding link between democratization and security sector reform also has a flip-side. Without functioning democratic institutions, governance of the security sector will be vulnerable to a hijacking of the process by particular interest groups. It is difficult to ensure that security institutions behave lawfully, as long as the rule of law is not established in a post-war situation. Security sector reform is unlikely to spearhead broader political and institutional reforms, in fact, security sector governance generally lags behind other reform efforts.¹²

There is also a third facet whose importance is often underestimated, but which is of great practical relevance in post-conflict situations under international tutelage. International players often find it difficult to sustain funding efforts to build up home grown security sector institutions over long periods of time, while domestic

¹⁰ See e.g. Nicole Ball and Michael Brzoska with Kees Kingma and Herbert Wulf, 'Voice and Accountability in the Security Sector', BICC Paper No.21, Bonn, 2002.

¹¹ Sudha Venu Menon Human security: Concept and practice, ICFAI Business School, Ahmedabad, 31 March 2007 http://mpr.ub.uni-muenchen.de/2478/1/MPRA_paper_2478.pdf; Shahrbanou Tadjbakhsh, Human Security: Concepts and Implications with an Application to Post-Intervention Challenges in Afghanistan, Centre d'études et de recherches internationales Sciences Po, Paris 2005, N°117-118 - septembre 2005, http://www.ceri-sciencespo.com/publica/etude/etude117_118.pdf.

¹² OECD DAC, Security System Reform and Governance, Paris, 2004, p.12.

funding is hard to come by. Sustainable structures of security provision can only be built in function of financial means.

Security sector reconstruction and reform programs should be clear about their limitations with regard to reaching goals that can result only from a decade-long evolution of democratic practice, such as solid trust between the population and security institutions. Externally promoted security sector reform can, however, contribute to capacity building, changing forms of legitimization, and add a veto to the political process. But security sector reform cannot change the type of domestic political regime. Security sector reform cannot work on the assumption that security problems can and should be solved prior and independently of the level of modernity, degrees of democracy, or even an existing nation-state.

Dilemmas of External SSR

Post-conflict situations seem to provide fertile ground for multi-stakeholder partnerships in security sector reconstruction and reform, but they are characterised by at least six dilemmas for partnership between external and internal actors.

First, post-conflict situations are marked by a lack of security and the need to quickly build up institutions which can provide security for the people as well as for state institutions. So all internal actors who can provide security should be welcomed as partners for external actors. However, often it is exactly those capable of providing security which, because of earlier violations of human rights or involvement in war crimes, should be reprimanded and their security institutions disbanded. A *tabula rasa* approach with respect to past deeds, e.g. a blanket amnesty, may be the prerequisite for the establishment of security in partnership between external and internal actors immediately after the end of wars. International actors generally sacrifice some elements of their reform programmes to achieve an acceptable outcome. However, general transition research suggests that after an initial shock, entrenched elements and traditional structures reemerge¹³, rendering the fiction of a ‘clean slate’ potentially dangerous because it allows old structures to take hold in the new

¹³ See e.g., Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation; Southern Europe, South America and Post-Communist Europe*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996.

situation. Imperatives of partnership in security provision and transitional justice may clash.

Second, in peace support operations, foreign troops and police which initially take over the role of security providers, are often faced with strategic behaviour aiming to use external actors to foster their particular interests.¹⁴ Security sector reconstruction and reform is not different from all policies in fairly open societies which are implemented and enforced in compromise among players. However, influencing external actors, who are often so much more resourceful, can become a primary motive of internal actors pursuing particular objectives. As a rule, external actors have a strong interest in transferring responsibility, as soon as possible, to national institutions. The interest in early transfer is self-evident: high costs, vanishing legitimacy and support in donor countries, security risks for external actors, and disincentives for national stakeholders to take over responsibility. External actors will thus generally favour those internal actors as partners who seemingly are willing to cooperate and quickly take over responsibility. These may however not be those actors whose objectives in terms of human rights, legitimacy of the security sector, democratic control etc. correspond best to those of external actors. It is therefore difficult to find the proper place of external actors in security sector reconstruction and reform.

A third, related dilemma pertains to the fundamental democratic shortcomings of external intervention. The power of international actors to bring about security sector reconstruction and reform depends not just on financial or human resources, but on the ability to shape, direct and control policies and outcomes. International organizations may reduce security problems and contribute to capacity building, but they themselves are not subject to principles of popular sovereignty, constitutionalism, electability and accountability in the territories where they act. Their capacity to implement programmes depends on violating just those democratic principles meant to be promoted. The legitimacy for reform measures, including for security sector reform, comes from the outside, contrary to the proclaimed objective of basing them on the will of those affected by their results. Outside actors regularly claim that there is such a widely, internationally accepted normative basis for security

sector reform efforts¹⁵ that it can proceed even in the absence of democratically expressed domestic consent, but is this a legitimate claim, consistent with democratic fundamentals?

The fourth dilemma concerns the interdependency of policies. In post-conflict situations, externally-sponsored SSR is premised on the assumption that public security and the state monopoly of legitimate violence are prerequisites for long-term democratic, developmental or overarching human security agendas. Afghanistan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Iraq and Kosovo are cases in point. They are either politico-military protectorates or semi-sovereign states. Security sector reform has been prioritized by international players in these cases over democratic consolidation. But some authors hold that democratization has to be accentuated, and that with proper democratization, responsible governance of security institutions will emerge over time. Another view holds that capacity building for good governance, such as the training of neutral bureaucrats and the establishment of the rule of law, have to be the priority¹⁶. The question here is primarily one of committing resources and capacities of external actors to competing demands – the support of creating of public security institutions and the democratization agenda.

A fifth dilemma pertains to the self-interests of individual domestic players. As the introduction of the rule of law and obedience of the law generally demonstrate, it is naïve not to take into account the immediate financial and political self-interests of all relevant actors in security sector reform programmes.¹⁷ Particularly for those key national figures, who were powerful prior to reform, security sector reform often threatens to undermine their power base. Because it challenges established power relations without immediately establishing a fixed pattern of new ones, security sector reform often results in an initial political instability. Even where social stability after reform may eventually be in their interest – as well as that of society as a whole – , some actors may be spoilers because they fear for their privileges. The questions are

¹⁴ See e.g. Gerald Knaus and Felix Martin, 'Lessons from Bosnia and Herzegovina. Travails of the European Raj', *Journal of Democracy*, Vol.14, No.3, 2003, pp.60–74; Michael Ignatieff, *Empire Light: Nation-Building in Bosnia, Kosovo and Afghanistan*, London: Vintage, 2003.

¹⁵ See e.g. the list of norms in Heiner Hänggi and Fred Tanner, *Promoting Security Governance in the EU's Neighborhood*, Chaillot Paper 80, Paris: EU Institute for Security Studies, 2005.

¹⁶ See e.g. the discussion in Thomas Carothers; *Aiding Democracy Abroad: The Learning Curve*, Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1999:

¹⁷ Jose Maria Maravall and Adam Przeworski, 'Introduction', Maria Maravall and Adam Przeworski (eds), *Democracy and the Rule of Law*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003

therefore whether and how the incentive structure of national players can be changed in favour of post-conflict security sector reconstruction and reform.

A sixth dilemma concerns the contradicting interests, divergent resource endowments, and varying levels of expertise among external actors. Due to its substantial resources and organizational capacity, the military often takes the lead in security-related issues in post-conflict situations, including issues of security sector reconstruction and reform. As security sector reform entails the use of methods and activities not generally common to the military, this constitutes, in many cases, a stretch of the capabilities and capacities of military organizations, in addition to claiming territory traditionally covered by development agencies. On the other hand, development agencies generally have little experience, and often limited inclination, to deal with security institutions or to develop programmes for security sector reform such as police reform or the design of laws for security sector institutions. Discussions about norms, rules and institutions of civil-military interaction in post-conflict situations are just emerging, and are highly influenced by national cultures and interests. An open question to be addressed therefore concerns the appropriate qualifications and forms of interaction among international groups.

Measures for success of post-conflict security sector reform and reconstruction

Security sector reform and reconstruction ultimately is part of the wider peacebuilding and human security agenda¹⁸. There is no space here to discuss the links between the forms of the provision of physical security and these grand objectives, which are, however, debated in a growing body of literature.¹⁹

Here I focus on immediate concerns of security sector reconstruction and reform, seven imminent risks of security sector reconstruction and reform in post-conflict situations on the way to peacebuilding and human security:

1. Resurgence of violence;

¹⁸ See EU Multipart, FINAL REPORT ON WP 2&3, http://www.multipart.eu/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=77&Itemid=113.

¹⁹ See e.g. Necla Tschirgi, *Peacebuilding as the Link between Security and Development: Is the Window of Opportunity Closing?* International Peace Academy, Studies in Security and Development, New York, December 2003; Mark Duffield, *Global Governance and the New Wars: The Merging of Development and Security*, London: Zed Books, 2001; Nicole Ball and Michael Brzoska with Kees

2. Politicization
3. Militarization
4. Ethnicization
5. Informalism
6. Corruption and favouritism
7. Lack of professionalism

Correspondingly, the degree of immediate success of security sector reconstruction and reform can be assessed by indicators for these factors:

1. Indicators for the *risk of the resurgence of violence* include the proliferation of warlords, and their power, the size and importance of areas under their control, the size of borders without legitimate control and the number of illegally held weapons or the number of unassisted ex-combatants.
2. *Politicization* of security forces is usually defined by their dependence on political parties, a non-mandated use of security forces, 'reserved domains', the lack of constraints on political activities, images of the enemy, irresponsible governmental promotion of societal prestige, a cult of the military and the absence or marginalization of non-governmental evaluative organizations.
3. *Militarization* is commonly documented by comparatively high numbers of men in uniform *per capita*, excessive military expenditure, forced recruitment of underage youth, obligatory military education, and repression of draft resisters.
4. *Ethnicization* (or other forms of clientelistic bias) finds expression in ethnic preferences in the composition of security agencies or in the neglect of others by the national public security apparatus.
5. *Informalism* reflects the absence of enforceable and publicly binding norms, particularly constitutional or legislative provisions for control and decisionmaking of security sector institutions.
6. *Corruption*, often accompanying deficiencies in the rule of law and/or the underfunding of security sector institutions, can be measured over time and in comparison to other countries.
7. Lack of *professionalism* is more difficult to measure. Some indirect indicators include low public credibility, transparency and accountability of security sector

institutions, as well as blurred lines of duty and responsibility. The ultimate measure is whether security sector institutions provide the kind of physical security that the law mandates.

Conditions for successful partnership in security sector reform and reconstruction

The following hypotheses about factors influencing success and failure of partnership of security sector reconstruction and reform efforts in post-conflict situations are derived from a preliminary analysis of post-conflict situations with strong international overtones. They need to be further tested and refined in empirical analysis.

The first refers to capacities and commitments of external actors. If they intend to play a substantial role in security sector reconstruction and reform, they must be willing to invest a substantial amount of political and financial capital. Security sector management will require a multidisciplinary approach involving legal and constitutional experts, military and police professionals, experts in human resources management, persons and agencies with experience in demobilization, re-trainers and labour market experts. Effective security sector reform is best done in cooperation among a wide range of players, including, those involved in peacekeeping and international administration in post-war situations, national and international donor agencies such as the World Bank as well as non-governmental organizations. However, while positive in principle, this multiplicity of international actors with similar mandates and projects operating in the same areas constantly creates 'turf wars'. Sometimes, discord exists even among competing groups from one donor country. Duplication, parallel chains of command, and fights over allocation of funds have a noticeable toll on efficiency and effectiveness. Competing national agendas, unclear division of labour, budgetary problems, and bureaucratic sluggishness result mainly from political negligence. Beyond a shared interest in stabilization, the agendas of international players, which are often driven by national or other parochial interest, often differ. International resources are usually spread over too many independent actors with divergent mandates, and limited willingness to coordinate programmes. Overall responsibility for the various aspects of security sector reform is often unclear, or deliberately vague. Security sector achievements

have been limited, for example in Afghanistan, because the implementation of the division of labour for elements of the overall reform process, agreed among national donors, has been flawed. In some cases, such schemes have served to unhinge the process, fostering uneven progress in a strategy contingent on simultaneous movement of its constituent elements. A solution could be to nominate a 'lead nation' for coordination or establish an international working body – not just a supervisory organ – for coordination.

The second hypothesis refers to the role of internal actors. SSR will only last if it is based on major input and a growing sense of control by domestic decision-makers and civil society or society groups. Imposition of security sector cannot even succeed in protectorates such as Kosovo and Bosnia-Herzegovina. External leverage has proven to be limited and external dictates to be counter-productive in the long run. It is vital that reform is carried by legitimate domestic actors and not something imposed by outsiders. Within a general framework, external support should be as demand-driven as possible and take the local socioeconomic environment into account. Projects are too often generated externally, 'from above' and then 'sold' to the recipient country without needs assessment by independent experts or the recipient government.

Finally, design and implementation of partnerships are crucial. This refers both to the cooperation among external actors, cooperation among internal actors, and cooperation between internal and external actors. Complaints about the poor coordination of security sector reform programmes are numerous. Chances for success of security sector reconstruction and reform increase if they form an integral part of post-conflict agreements, since they tend to reduce the likelihood of a relapse into violence. The build-up of institutions is of great importance. These institutions need to be domestic institutions, from a functioning parliament able to exercise overall control to functioning bureaucracies, career-building institutions and so on. Partnership in security sector reform and reconstruction is primary partnership in institution-building, both institutions with direct relevance for security sectors and institutions charged with providing the framework for a security sector which supports and promotes peacebuilding and human security. While security sector reform should not be overburdened by trying to make it into a vehicle for issues better dealt with through democratization or a substitute for comprehensive state-building, assisting capacity building should clearly be connected with de-militarization, de-

politicization, and strengthening of the rule of law. Security sector reform should not result in beefing up repressive regimes or authoritarian politics. By raising expectations without sufficient capacities, frustration, blame, and deflecting responsibilities to internationals are the customary repercussions.

Conclusion

Post-conflict situations are almost by definition in desperate need of security sector reconstruction and reform. External actors have begun to take up this challenge and have been involved in a great number of security sector reform efforts. Various forms, sequencing and implementation modes for security sector reconstruction and reform have been tried. A major lesson, which however is not always leading to corresponding behaviour, is that security sector reform promoted by external actor needs to be implemented in partnership with local actors. Cooperation among external and internal actors, however, is far from simple or straightforward. Both external and internal parties face a number of challenges, dilemmas and choices, which result from pre-war structures, the conduct of the war and the post-war situation itself. This text suggested a list of major shortcomings of security sector reconstruction and reform – which, when applied positively, can also be used as criteria for measuring success and failure in individual cases.

Post-conflict reconstruction. Along with other countries in the international community, the Netherlands helps former conflict zones to establish a peaceful and safe society, for example by reducing social inequality and improving security. Reconstruction driven by the local population. When wars end, the affected areas are often left devastated. There are large numbers of refugees, wounded and trauma victims. The Netherlands helped by setting up land registries in two Guatemalan provinces. Boosting security in poor countries. Poor countries regularly end up in a downward spiral of violent conflicts, a poorly functioning economy and political instability. They lack the financial resources needed to make substantive improvements to their security sector. Recalling Decision of the Assembly (Assembly/AU/Dec.177(X)) of February 2008 which encourages the Commission to develop a comprehensive AU Policy Framework on Security Sector Reform (SSR), within the context of the Policy Framework on Post-conflict Reconstruction and Development adopted by the Executive Council in Banjul, The Gambia in June 2006; Determined to maintain peace and security in Africa in accordance with our obligations under the Constitutive Act of the African Union, the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, the Solemn Dec ECOWAS Policy framework for security sector reform and governance. Supplementary Act on ECOWAS Policy Framework for Security Sector Reform and Governance. OUTLINE. ACRONYMS. A. African and West African solidarity and partnership B. Respect of national sovereignty and territorial integrity C. SSRG and regional integration D. Regional and national ownership E. SSRG will be context-specific F. SSRG and gender G. SSRG and human rights. Section III: the essential features of the ECOWAS ssrc. While some States are in post-conflict situations, other States considered stable are facing localised conflicts with potential or actual regional dimensions.