

Trends in Security Sector Reform (SSR): Policy, Practice and Research

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About this study

The security sector reform (SSR) agenda emerged within development and security policy circles in the late 1990s in recognition of the need for a broader approach to security assistance. The agenda was heavily influenced by a parallel process of rethinking security concepts underway in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Changes in the international environment following the 9/11 attacks have, however, had a mixed impact upon the SSR policy agenda. While the international community's experiences in Afghanistan and Iraq have brought home the need for more comprehensive responses to security problems in crisis countries, the 'war on terror' raises the spectre of a renewed focus on traditional 'hard' security doctrines reminiscent of the Cold War era. These changes highlight the importance of understanding what factors affect the influence of research on policy and practice in SSR. This paper examines new areas for collaboration between donor funding organizations and research institutions in the South.

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Acronyms

ACPP	Africa Conflict Prevention Pool (UK)
ASDR	African Security Dialogue and Research
ASSN	Africa Security Sector Network
AU	African Union
CDD	Centre for Democracy and Development
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CRS	Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (US)
DAC	OECD Development Assistance Committee
DAT	Defence Advisory Team (UK)
DCAF	Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of the Armed Forces
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
DOD	Department of Defense (US)
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry (UK)
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
FAA	Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (US)
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office (UK)
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
IEPADES	Instituto de Enseñanza para del Desarrollo Sostenible
IFIs	International financial institutions
ISS	Institute for Security Studies
JSSR	Justice and Security Sector Reform
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MOD	Ministry of Defence
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OPS	Office of Public Safety (USAID)
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SADSEM	Southern African Defence and Security Management Network

SJSR Security and Justice Sector Reform
SSAJ Safety, Security and Access to Justice
SSDAT Security Sector Development Advisory Team (SSDAT)
SSR Security Sector/System Reform
UK United Kingdom
US United States
USAID United States Agency for International Development

Chapter 1

Introduction¹

The security sector reform agenda emerged within development and security policy circles in the late 1990s in recognition of the need for a broader approach to security assistance. It was heavily influenced by a parallel process of rethinking security concepts underway in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The overall objective of SSR, as defined by the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC), is to ‘create a secure environment that is conducive to development, poverty reduction and democracy’.²

The four core objectives of SSR as defined by the DAC are:

- Establishment of effective governance, oversight and accountability in the security system;
- Improved delivery of security and justice services;
- Development of local leadership and ownership of the reform process; and
- Sustainability of justice and security service delivery.³

Initially a concept debated primarily within the development community, SSR has increasingly become a concern of foreign and defence ministries as well in OECD countries.

¹ This paper updates a report commissioned by the International Development Research Center (IDRC) in Ottawa, Canada, to help IDRC to better target its research around issues of security and insecurity and to support its future programming on Security Sector Reform (SSR). A draft of the paper was presented for discussion at a workshop held at IDRC Headquarters in November 2005, and a revised version of that paper is available on the IDRC website, Nicole Ball and Dylan Hendrickson, *Trends in Security Sector Reform (SSR): Policy, Practice and Research*, 2006. In preparing the original report, the authors drew upon four key sources of information: first, their close involvement with OECD DAC and Member countries since the late 1990s in a range of initiatives to develop the SSR policy agenda; second, a recently completed global survey of SSR, sponsored by the DAC, which had both a donor component and a regional component covering 110 developing countries; third, the burgeoning academic and policy literature on SSR and related security themes; and fourth, the findings of a brief survey questionnaire on SSR which was circulated both to funding organisations and colleagues working in different developing regions.

² See Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, *Security System Reform and Governance*, DAC Guidelines and Reference Series, Paris: OECD, 2005, p.16, www.oecd.org/dac.

³ See Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, *The OECD/DAC Handbook on Security System Reform: Supporting Security and Justice*, 2007, Section 1, p. 21.

Changes in the international environment following the 9/11 attacks have had a mixed impact upon the SSR policy agenda. While the international community's experiences in Afghanistan and Iraq have brought home the need for more comprehensive responses to security problems in crisis countries, the 'war on terror' raises the spectre of a renewed focus on traditional 'hard' security doctrines reminiscent of the Cold War era. These changes highlight the critical importance of understanding what factors affect the influence of research on policy and practice in SSR.

This paper demonstrates significant differences among SSR policy as articulated by the OECD DAC, the objectives of international security assistance programmes, and the needs of developing countries. At the root of this disjuncture are four inter-related problems:

- First, the empirical base of the donor SSR policy agenda is weak. This is in no small part a consequence of the heavy normative emphasis of SSR which has tended to limit detailed, independent research on reform contexts in favour of prescriptive studies;
- Second, there is uneven 'buy-in' to the SSR policy agenda. As the community of practitioners has expanded, a growing number of issues related to security have been appropriated under the SSR rubric and the holistic, governance-based emphasis central to the early approach has been diluted;
- Third, differing donor interests, objectives, working cultures and practices have made it difficult to harmonise international policies in the security domain or align these with the needs and priorities of countries receiving assistance;
- Fourth, weak alliances between researchers and advocacy groups, both within countries in the South and between South and North, impede efforts to marshal detailed research findings in ways that inform and influence high level policy debates.

Addressing these gaps provides a starting point for more effectively bridging SSR research, policy and practice. This paper examines new opportunities in the area of SSR research as well as new areas for collaboration between donor funding organizations and research institutions in the South.

The paper begins by charting the emergence of the SSR policy agenda. It then examines how SSR policy has evolved, efforts to turn policy into practice, and the challenges of using research to influence policy. It concludes by taking stock of existing research initiatives in the area of SSR and identifying both gaps and new research avenues in the area of SSR.

Chapter 2

Emergence of the SSR Policy Agenda

Security sector reform has assumed an increasingly prominent role on the international policy agenda since the end of the 1990s. It has been linked with debates on poverty alleviation, sustainable development, professionalisation of the security services, democratic governance, and conflict mitigation. This involves a significant departure from the Cold War era when the emphasis in international security policy and research was on the rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union and on state security rather than broad-based, people-centred security.

The East-West rivalry played itself out in a variety of ways, including a strategic arms race, proxy wars, and significant financial and materiel security-related support for friendly governments. The result included tolerance of politicized security forces, war as a means of resolving disputes, flagrant disregard for the rule of law on the part of many security services and civilian élites, serious human rights abuses by security services, and security sectors that absorbed a significant amount of state resources without being held to account for the use of those resources or necessarily being able to protect the state and the people from violence in its various forms.

This section briefly outlines the Cold War security agenda in the policy and research communities and explains how this agenda began to change starting in the late 1980s.

Security policy and research during the Cold War

During the Cold War, the major powers in both East and West provided a substantial amount of technical, financial, and material support on concessional

terms to security services in allied or friendly countries, especially the military. Most of this was delivered through the donor's security or foreign ministries by security institutions or contractors and focused on transferring skills or weapons and other security-related equipment. The major powers also provided a not-insignificant amount of economic support, often budgetary or balance-of-payments assistance, to reduce the economic burden of maintaining security services in states of high strategic importance. This assistance was most often channelled through development assistance agencies. In some cases, technical assistance and training for security services was also channelled through development agencies.⁴ Despite this, bilateral and multilateral development donors sought to avoid involvement with the security sector to the greatest extent possible during the Cold War.

The objective of security assistance during this period was to garner support for the foreign and security policy objectives of the major powers in East and West. Ensuring that the security sector was well managed and operated according to democratic principles or met the security needs of all citizens in those countries receiving security assistance was of little, if any, interest to security-assistance donors in these years. What is more, promotion of democratic governance in any sector was not on the Cold War development agenda. This and the general lack of attention to the security sector on the part of development actors meant that there was essentially no mitigating influence on either the donors or recipients of security assistance.

The security services in many countries were thus able to act with substantial autonomy and consistently undermined opportunities for developing participatory forms of government, societies based on the rule of law, and a strong civilian capacity to manage and monitor the security sector. Excessive, inefficient, and/or inappropriate security expenditure reduced the resources available for development and weakened the ability of the security services to carry out their assigned tasks. As a result, élite and regime security flourished at the expense of the security of citizens, communities, and often even the state.

Similarly, development specialists in academia and the broader research community gave virtually no attention to the security sector or the relationship between security and development during the Cold War period. A good deal of work was, however, carried out on military involvement in politics.⁵ During the 1960s and 1970s, this research tended to fall into one of four categories: a) the

⁴ Perhaps the most notorious example among NATO countries was USAID's Office of Public Safety (OPS), which provided training to foreign police services. Revelations that some trainees were implicated in significant human rights abuses led to the termination of the OPS program and the 1974 amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (FAA) that places stringent restrictions on assistance to foreign law enforcement agencies.

⁵ This focus on the military excluded a significant portion of the security sector in developing countries; however, it reflected the fact that the military was generally the major political actor within the security sector and received the lion's share of security-related assistance.

military as ‘modernizer,’ b) the military as consumer of scarce resources, c) the military as promoter of capitalism, and d) critiques of the preceding three. Much of the literature produced during the 1960s and 1970s relied on inadequate data and inappropriate methodologies, and relatively few comprehensive case studies of individual countries were undertaken. In general, there was comparatively little effort to understand the complex political, social and economic dynamics that shaped the relationships between civilian and security élites and affected the capacity of states to provide the broad-based security that their populations required for sustainable political and socio-economic development.⁶

During the 1980s, however, as military-led or -supported authoritarianism began to give way to more participatory forms of government, there was an increase in publications examining the military’s role in governance, particularly very detailed case studies of transition countries.⁷ During this period, the literature on the impact of the broader security sector on development also began to emerge.⁸ Additionally, the peace research community examined issues such as prevention of violent intergroup conflict (internal and transborder), prevention of state violence against populations, and post-conflict reconciliation, all of which provided inputs into the concept of SSR as it began to develop during the late 1990s.

First steps toward a new agenda

Impact of the end of the Cold War

Starting in the early 1990s, the strategic priorities of the major powers began to change with the break-up of the Soviet Union and the shift towards political liberalisation in Eastern Europe. This shift in priorities had a number of consequences.

There was a significant decrease in both the volume of security assistance and the number of recipients worldwide that contributed, in some cases, to the end of long-standing conflicts. This in turn provided opportunities to examine the full range of factors affecting political and economic development, to reform

⁶ For a review of the literature of the 1960s and 1970s, see Nicole Ball, *The Military in the Development Process: A Guide to Issues*, Claremont, CA: Regina Books, 1981. There were, of course, important exceptions in terms of case study work during this period, with the work of Harold Crouch and Herbert Feith on Indonesia leading the list. For example, Harold Crouch, *The Army and Politics in Indonesia*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1978; Herbert Feith, *The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia*, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1962; and Herbert Feith, “The Dynamics of Guided Democracy,” in Ruth T. McVey, ed., *Indonesia*, New Haven: HRAF Press, 1963, pp. 309-409.

⁷ For a review of the literature on civil-military relations, see Eboe Hutchful and Robin Luckham, “Civil-Military Relations in Africa,” Draft Framework Paper for the African Center for Strategic Studies, nd. Key works on Latin America included Alfred Stepan, *Rethinking Military Politics: Brazil and the Southern Cone*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988 and Alain Rouquié, *The Military and the State in Latin America*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1987. In Asia, Harold Crouch and Herbert Feith were mentioned above. Other noteworthy case studies from this period include Suchit Bunbongkarn, *Military in Thai Politics, 1981-86*, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1988.

⁸ Nicole Ball, *Security and Economy in the Third World*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988.

public institutions, and to change élite attitudes and behaviours in both the developing and transition countries.

The break-up of the bipolar world also created space for issues such as governance, poverty reduction, and conflict prevention to enter the development and security assistance agendas of OECD countries. This in turn enabled the development donors to begin to discuss the linkages between security and development and the appropriate role of development assistance in strengthening security in developing and transition countries, for some modification in security assistance policies, and the beginning of a dialogue between development and security donors.

Perhaps most important, the end of the Cold War created space for a discussion on the quality of development, governance, and security *among local actors in the non-OECD countries themselves* and for the emergence of civil society organizations and coalitions that pressed for people-centred approaches to security and the application of democratic governance principles.

The building blocks of the SSR concept

Pro-reformers in civil society in the developing and transition countries helped to define what came to be known as the SSR agenda by undertaking practical work aimed at educating security-service personnel, civil authorities and members of civil society on their various roles and responsibilities in democratic societies and carrying out research on ongoing political transition processes. Box 1 describes four civil society-led training and research initiatives in Africa that were launched well before the term “SSR” gained currency. There are clear linkages between work carried out by civil society actors in South Africa (Military Research Group, Defence Management Programme, individual policing, defence and intelligence specialists) and the security policies developed by the South African government beginning in the mid-1990s.⁹ Additionally, civil society actors contributed to the evolution of South African security policies. Both of these strands of work, in turn, strongly influenced other reform, research and policy advocacy work in Africa and other parts of the world, as well as the conceptual work underpinning the emergence of the SSR agenda.

⁹ For a summary of this process, see Gavin Cawthra, ‘Security Transformation in Post-Apartheid South Africa’, pp. 31-56 in *Governing Insecurity: Democratic Control of Military and Security Establishments in Transitional Democracies*, ed. Gavin Cawthra and Robin Luckham, London and New York: Zed Press, 2003.

Box 1. African-led Training and Research Initiatives

The first non-governmental training program on defence and security in Africa was established by members of the Military Research Group at the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg in 1993 with grants from the Danish government. The Defence Management Programme was transformed into the Centre for Defence and Security Management and is now the coordinating partner in the Southern African Defence and Security Management Network (SADSEM). SADSEM links five countries in defence and security research and training that involves security force personnel, civilians in government, and civil society actors

The Security Transformation Project at the Institute for Security Studies (ISS) in Pretoria was established in the late 1990s to contribute to the development of an indigenous African intellectual and practical capability in the spheres of defence and civil-military management. The ISS itself, established in 1991, works towards a stable and peaceful Africa characterised by sustained development, human rights, the rule of law, democracy and collaborative security. The ISS undertakes applied research, supports policy development, training and capacity building, monitors policy implementation, collects and disseminates information, and networks regionally and internationally.

The African Security Dialogue and Research (ASDR) in Accra, established in 1998, specializes in issues of security and their relationship with democratic consolidation. Its core aims include fostering dialogue and consensus on conflict and security in Africa, especially the role and governance of security forces; undertaking research, analysis, monitoring, and advocacy on issues relating to civil-military relations and national and regional security in Africa; encouraging greater transparency and accountability in the formulation and implementation of national security and defence policies; enhancing oversight capabilities of national legislatures and elected representatives; strengthening the capabilities and resources of civil society and NGOs in the analysis and discussion of defence and security sector issues.

The Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD), established in 1997, aims to promote the values of democracy, peace and human rights in Africa and especially in the West African sub-region. One of its major program areas is "governance, security and development." The primary goal of this component of CDD's work is to coordinate a research, training and advocacy programme in governance, regional security, conflict prevention and peacebuilding as a means of enhancing human security and human development. CDD recently published a handbook on democratic governance in the security sector as part of its educational efforts in this area.

Sources: <http://www.sadsem.net>, <http://www.iss.co.za>, <http://www.africansecurity.org/>, <http://www.cdd.org.uk>

Another early influence was work on democratic civil-military relations in the transition countries of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union that got underway in the mid-1990s. Because NATO and the EU made adherence to principles of democratic civil-military relations a condition for membership, candidate countries had an enormous incentive to begin to apply these principles. For their part, NATO and EU members had an incentive to develop the capacity to support efforts to strengthen the accountability of the armed forces in candidate

countries and to improve the capacity of the civil authorities to manage the defence sector.¹⁰ However, the situation in the transition countries was somewhat different than it was in the developing world. In transition countries, the development donors played a secondary role behind political and security actors. Nonetheless, the principles and objectives were the same as those espoused by pro-reformers in the developing countries.¹¹

The concept of SSR was also influenced by the broader 'human security' agenda which is based on two key ideas: first, that the protection of individuals is critical to both national and international security; and second, that the security conditions required by people for their development are not limited to traditional matters like national defence and law and order, but rather incorporate broader political, economic and social issues that ensure a life free from risk and ill-being.¹² Championed by countries such as Canada and Japan, the human security agenda was also strongly influenced by the process of rethinking security concepts that got underway in Africa, Asia and Latin America in the late 1980s.¹³

In terms of developing the concept of security sector reform, there was initially a serious divergence between the objectives of pro-reformers, especially those in the developing countries, and development donors. As we examine in some detail in the following section, while the differences have decreased over time on the conceptual level, tensions continue to exist at the operational level. For pro-reformers, the issues that needed to be addressed centred on reform both of security institutions and of the behaviour and attitudes of security personnel in a manner consistent with the principles of democratic governance and the politics of reform in individual countries. Additionally, pro-reformers identified the need to strengthen civil oversight bodies, enhance the capacity of civilians to deal effectively with security issues, and increase the operational effectiveness of the security services.¹⁴ In the early 1990s, however, the development donors focused

¹⁰ On changes in UK military assistance, for example, see Andrew Cottey and Anthony Forster, *Reshaping Defence: New Roles for Military Cooperation and Assistance*, Adelphi Paper no. 365, London: IISS, 2004. On the EU and NATO requirements, see for example, Adam Daniel Rotfeld, 'Europe: the multilateral security process', *SIPRI Yearbook 1995: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995, pp. 275–81; OSCE, 'Towards a Genuine Partnership in a New Era', Budapest Document 1994, <http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/osce/new/budapest-summit-declaration.html>; NATO, 'Membership Action Plan', <http://www.nato.int/docu/facts/2000/nato-map.htm>; and NATO, *Study on NATO Enlargement*, Brussels, September 1995. See also Dylan Hendrickson and Andrzej Karkoska, 'The Challenge of Security Sector Reform,' *SIPRI Yearbook 2002: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002, pp. 175-202. Also republished as a *CSDG Paper*: <http://www.securityanddevelopment.org/pdf/CSDG%20Papers%20Number%201.pdf>

¹¹ See for example numerous publications on strengthening democratic accountability in the security sector in this region by the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of the Armed Forces, <http://www.dcaf.ch> and the Centre for European Security Studies in Groningen, Netherlands, <http://odur.let.rug.nl/cess/>

¹² See Dylan Hendrickson, "Overview of Regional Survey Findings and Policy Implications for Donors," Part II, Chapter 4 in Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, *Security System Reform and Governance*, 2005. Also republished as a *CSDG Paper*: <http://www.securityanddevelopment.org/pdf/CSDG%20Papers%20Number%202.pdf>

¹³ For a comparison of the state-centric view of security and a more people-centric approach that began to emerge in the late 1980s, see Gavin Cawthra, *Securing South Africa's Democracy: Defence, Development and Security in Transition*, London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1997, pp. 7-26.

¹⁴ Laurie Nathan, "Obstacles to Security Sector Reform in New Democracies," pp. 29-33, in *Security Sector Reform: Potentials and Challenges for Conflict Transformation*, ed. Clem McCartney, Martina Fischer, and Oliver Wils, Berghof Handbook

on how much developing and transition countries were spending on the military. This was because governance had not yet embedded itself in the development agenda and, at least partly as a consequence, the rather simplistic view held sway that donors could pressure governments to change resource allocation patterns without tackling any of the deep-rooted and highly political reasons why resources are allocated as they are.¹⁵

By the end of the 1990s, governance was a legitimate subject of discourse for the development donors, and that opened the door for discussions of security-sector governance and collaboration with security actors. What is more, participatory poverty assessments undertaken since the 1990s consistently identified the lack of security as a major concern for poor people, especially a) crime and violence, b) civil conflict and war, c) persecution by the police, and d) lack of justice.¹⁶ The research carried out under the auspices of the World Bank 'Voices of the Poor' program was particularly influential in helping the donors understand that physical insecurity was a major impediment to poverty reduction. This implied a need for effective security services and justice systems, which in turn required a certain outlay of state resources. The donors were deeply involved in peacebuilding efforts in conflict-affected countries and gradually coming to the realization that conflict prevention is less expensive than recovery. This was an added incentive for beginning to tackle the problem of unaccountable and ineffective security services and justice systems.

As Michael Brzoska has suggested, 'the time was ripe' for the emergence of the concept of security sector reform.¹⁷

Dialogue Series, Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management, 2004, <http://www.berghof-handbook.net/ssr.htm>.

¹⁵ For a brief review of the military expenditure approach to the security sector in developing countries, see Michael Brzoska, *Development Donors and the Concept of Security Sector Reform*, Occasional Paper no. 4, Geneva: Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, November 2003, pp. 5-10, <http://www.dcaf.ch>. The apolitical approach to security expenditures has not yet disappeared, however. In January 2006, outgoing World Bank Country Director for West Bank / Gaza Nigel Roberts was cited in an interview in the Israeli daily newspaper *Ha'aretz* as follows: "The Palestinian government needs the continued assistance of the international community," Roberts declares, "and to secure that, it must begin to assume its responsibilities." Raising salaries [for security service personnel] at a time when resources are unavailable for this, he notes, is precisely the opposite of demonstrating responsibility and reliability. The direct consequence of this move was a decision by the Bank, supported by the European Commission, to freeze \$60 million for funding the PA's operating budget. According to Roberts, this far-reaching step was taken because the Palestinians did not fulfil commitments on budget control. Were the donors not to hold the PA responsible, they would lose the confidence of their taxpayers that enough control can be exercised to prevent the money from being used to finance acts of terror.' Akiva Eldar, 'Parting Shots,' *Ha'aretz*, January 10, 2006, <http://www.haaretz.com>. While not wanting to minimize the need for fiscal responsibility or the size of the Palestinian National Authority's (PA) fiscal deficit, there are strong demographic and political reasons why the PA chose to raise the salaries of the security services (along with the salaries of some civil servants) in mid-2005. For example, see Nicole Ball, Peter Bartu and Adriaan Verheul, *Squaring the Circle: Security-Sector Reform and Transformation and Fiscal Stabilisation in Palestine*, Report prepared for the UK Department for International Development, January 2006.

¹⁶ Deepa Narayan, Robert Chambers, Meera Shah, and Patti Petesch, *Voices of the Poor: Crying Out for Change*, (Oxford [UK]: Oxford University Press for the World Bank, 2000), p. 155, <http://www.worldbank.org/poverty/voices/reports/crying/cry.pdf>. Despite the emphasis on crime and violence and inadequate justice in participatory poverty assessments and the inclusion of justice and rule of law in early iterations of the SSR concept, many pro-reformers in the justice sector were reluctant to engage in developing the SSR concept or participate in SSR-related activities. This helped perpetuate the notion that issues relating to defence and intelligence are separate from justice and rule of law concerns, despite the obvious connections.

¹⁷ Brzoska, *Development Donors and the Concept of Security Sector Reform*.

Chapter 3

Evolution of SSR Policy, Practice and Research

This section first charts SSR policy developments since the late 1990s, focusing on the OECD DAC efforts to develop a common policy framework, which all the major bilateral and multilateral donors have supported in principle. It then examines efforts to turn SSR policy into effective programming, paying particular attention to the impact of the 9/11 attacks and a shift back to more traditional 'hard' security concerns.

SSR policy developments

DFID as a champion of SSR

Security sector reform was initially championed by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) following the election of the Labour Party in 1997. The UK White Paper on International Development of November 1997 identified security as central to sustained development and poverty reduction. Among the areas highlighted for UK action were to 'help other countries to develop democratically accountable armed forces' and to 'discourage excessive military expenditure in developing countries'.¹⁸ In May 1998, the Secretary of State for International Development, Clare Short, announced the need for 'a partnership between the development community and the military' in order to address the 'inter-related issues of security, development and conflict prevention.'¹⁹

By early 1999, DFID had produced a policy note on poverty and the security sector that outlined the conditions under which development assistance could be used to engage in security sector reform and the specific criteria for DFID

¹⁸ *Eliminating World Poverty: A Challenge for the 21st Century*, White Paper on International Development, Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for International Development by the Command of Her Majesty, November 1997, paras. 3.48, 3.49, 3.52 and 3.55.

¹⁹ Clare Short, "Security, Development and Conflict Prevention," Speech at the Royal College of Defence Studies, May 13, 1998.

engagement.²⁰ DFID's SSR policy initially did not include 'police carrying out their normal law enforcement activities.' It did, however, include 'those responsible for policing and the administration of justice.' The reason given for this artificial distinction – which was in direct contradiction to the new thinking on security that had emerged about a decade earlier – was that 'Improved policing is already covered in DFID's good governance work'.²¹

DFID could, of course, have chosen to integrate security sector reform into its ongoing governance work. Instead, the Secretary of State gave responsibility for SSR to the Conflict and Humanitarian Affairs Department (CHAD), now the Conflict, Humanitarian and Security Department (CHASE). DFID's SSR policy initially focused on the defence sector. DFID's Governance Department (since disbanded in an administrative restructuring) developed a parallel policy on safety, security and access to justice (SSAJ).²² This not only established the basis for a turf war within DFID. It also delayed meaningful dialogue within the British government – especially among DFID, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and the Foreign Office (FCO) – on how to address insecurity most effectively through the UK's foreign, defence and development policies.

Within a few years, however, it became evident to the British government that the security sector includes large portions of the justice system and should ideally be dealt with as a whole. DFID, FCO and MOD agreed a Policy Brief in 2003 that defined the security sector as 'Bodies authorised to use force (the armed forces, police, and paramilitary units)' and 'Judicial and public security bodies (the judiciary, justice ministries, defence and prosecution services, prisons and corrections services, human rights commissions and customary and traditional justice systems).'²³ This is very much in line with strategic level thinking that has emerged over the last decade through the OECD Development Assistance Committee.

²⁰ DFID, *Poverty and the Security Sector*, 1999, <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/poverty-security.pdf>. See also Clare Short, "Security Sector Reform and the Elimination of Poverty," Speech at the Centre for Defence Studies, King's College, London, March 9, 1999. URL:

http://www.securityanddevelopment.org/pdf/Security_Sector_Reform_and_the_Elimination_of_Poverty_DFID.pdf

²¹ DFID, *Poverty and the Security Sector*, p. 1.

²² Department for International Development, *Justice and Poverty Reduction: Safety, Security and Access to Justice for All*, London, 2000, <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Pubs/files/justice.pdf>. See also Department for International Development, *Safety, Security and Accessible Justice: Putting policy into practice*, London, 2002, <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/safesecureaccjustice.pdf>.

²³ United Kingdom, *Security sector reform policy brief*, London, 2003, p. 3, <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/security-sector-brief.pdf>. Similarly, DFID's SSR guidelines define the security sector as including, among others, the 'core security actors' (the armed forces; police; paramilitary forces; gendarmeries; presidential guards, intelligence and security services (both military and civilian); coast guards; border guards; customs authorities; reserve or local security units (civil defence forces, national guards, militias) and the 'justice and law enforcement institutions' (judiciary; justice ministries; prisons; criminal investigation and prosecution services; human rights commissions and ombudsmen; customary and traditional justice systems). Department for International Development, *Understanding and Supporting Security Sector Reform*, London, 2002, p. 7, <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/supportingsecurity.pdf>.

The OECD DAC approach

One reason for the growing alignment between UK and DAC approaches to SSR is that the UK has strongly supported the work that the Members of the OECD DAC have carried out since the late 1990s to develop a security sector reform policy agenda that has at its core democratic security sector governance.²⁴ In 2004, DAC Members agreed a policy statement and paper on *Security System Reform and Governance*.²⁵ In the policy paper, SSR is defined as ‘the transformation of the “security system” – which includes all the actors, their roles, responsibilities and actions – working together to manage and operate the system in a manner that is more consistent with democratic norms and sound principles of good governance’ (p. 20).

The objective of SSR according to the DAC is ‘to increase *partner countries’ ability* to meet the range of security needs within their societies in a manner consistent with democratic norms and sound principles of governance, transparency and the rule of law. SSR includes, but extends well beyond, the narrower focus of more traditional security assistance on defence, intelligence and policing.’²⁶

The DAC SSR agenda is built on four main pillars: i) developing a clear institutional framework for providing security that integrates security and development policy and includes all relevant actors and focuses on the vulnerable, such as women, children, and minority groups; ii) strengthening the governance and oversight of security institutions; iii) building capable and professional security forces that are accountable to civil authorities and open to dialogue with civil society organisations; and iv) promoting the sustainability of justice and security service delivery.²⁷

The OECD DAC thus approaches SSR squarely within a development co-operation framework, reflecting the view that it should be supportive of wider efforts to strengthen state capacity, to prevent violent conflict, and to promote

²⁴ DAC work on security and development began in 1997. The first statement on security sector reform appears in OECD, “Guidelines on Conflict, Peace, and Development Co-operation on the Threshold of the 21st Century, 1997,” Part II, *Helping Prevent Violent Conflict. The DAC Guidelines*, Paris: OECD, 2001, <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/15/54/1886146.pdf>. Although this document contained only a short statement on SSR, many of the main themes are present, including whole-of-government approach, a governance orientation, and the importance of strengthening both justice systems and civil society. See p. 119. The DAC approach to SSR was more fully developed in the 2001 DAC Guidelines, in Part I of *Helping Prevent Violent Conflict*.

²⁵ OECD Development Assistance Committee, *Security System Reform and Governance: Policy and Good Practice*, Paris: OECD, 2004.

²⁶ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, *Security System Reform and Governance: Policy and Good Practice*, Policy Brief, May 2004, p. 1, <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/20/47/31642508.pdf>.

²⁷ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, *Security System Reform and Governance*, Policy Brief, p. 2, and Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, *OECD DAC Handbook on Security System Reform: Supporting Security and Justice*, Paris, 2007, <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/43/25/38406485.pdf>.

human development. The DAC has also sought to promote wider acceptance of this agenda by other parts of OECD governments and OECD partner countries in Africa, Asia, Central-East Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), and Latin America. While efforts to improve accountability in the defence sectors of NATO and EU candidate states predated the development of the DAC SSR agenda, the DAC process has been central to getting SSR on the international agenda and challenge to the traditional way of doing business for the donors of both development and security assistance.

Other central elements of the DAC approach include:

- People-centred security rather than state-centred security;
- A holistic view of the security needs of a country rather than an exclusive emphasis on one component of the security sector, such as defence, policing, intelligence or justice;
- Assistance tailored to the needs of each country receiving security assistance rather than transferring structures and procedures from OECD country experience;
- Facilitation and support for learning-by-doing rather than direct implementation;
- Placing governance at the heart of all activities undertaken, with an emphasis on democratic accountability, rule of law and internationally-accepted human rights standards rather than on the transfer of operational training and equipment;
- Adopting a timeframe that is consistent with the capacity of local stakeholders rather than short-term assistance; and
- Recognition that implementing the SSR agenda requires a whole-of-government approach by donor countries, including, critically, the development ministry rather than engagement by one ministry or only security-sector actors.

Implementing SSR: New mechanisms and ways of doing business

Traditional security assistance has not for the most part provided assistance according to the principles underlying the DAC approach in the past, and although these principles are well known to development actors, they have not yet been fully incorporated into development programming. Donors that have been most serious about incorporating these principles into their security-sector assistance programs have discovered that they needed to develop new mechanisms and new ways of doing business. To support a more uniform approach to SSR work and to begin to translate norms into operational activities,

the DAC developed a handbook on SSR.²⁸ In 2007 the DAC Secretariat inaugurated a series of in-country seminars and workshops – in both donor and reforming countries – to explain the approach taken in the handbook and has developed a training course on SSR to help policymakers and practitioners in DAC Member countries develop ‘the skills needed to assess, design, implement and evaluate programmes, as based on the OECD SSR handbook’.²⁹

A major lesson of the past is that efforts to build the capacity of the security services to protect the people and the state from violence must go hand in hand with efforts to ensure that the security services are accountable to elected civil authorities *and* that the civil authorities have the capacity to manage and oversee the security services. No category of assistance, including security assistance, is able by itself to provide all the necessary inputs. Therefore close collaboration is required between the providers of security assistance and a range of other actors. Specifically with regard to assistance to fragile states, DAC members have come to understand that

Meeting the special needs of fragile states often requires the use of a range of instruments in addition to aid—including humanitarian assistance, diplomacy, security, justice, and financial measures such as debt relief. A coherent, whole of government approach is therefore required of international actors, involving those agencies responsible for instance, for political, security, justice, and financial affairs, as well as those responsible for development aid and humanitarian assistance, respecting the mandates of each agency.³⁰

There has accordingly been increased interaction between the Conflict Prevention and Development Co-operation (CPDC) network within the DAC and the Fragile States network and more attention to whole of government approaches to development assistance.³¹ While increased co-operation is important, the need for a whole of government approach to SSR underscores one of the problems with the way the DAC has addressed SSR to date. The DAC approach has been developed primarily by representatives of development assistance agencies, not by representatives of the full range of ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) that should be engaged in SSR work. As such, DAC documents have tended to be written in a way that does not reflect the concerns of all relevant government departments and, even more important, may not reflect the reality in reforming countries.

The UK was the first bilateral donor to adopt a whole-of-government

²⁸ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, *OECD DAC Handbook on Security System Reform*

²⁹ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, CPDC Training Courses, Course II – Security System Reform and Governance, http://www.oecd.org/document/36/0,3343,en_2649_34567_40268260_1_1_1_1,00.html.

³⁰ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, ‘Whole of Government Approaches in Fragile States.’ http://www.oecd.org/document/4/0,3343,en_2649_33693550_35237252_1_1_1_1,00.html.

³¹ In 2008 the CPDC merged with the Governance and Capacity Development Network. The new body will be responsible for taking forward SSR-related work.

approach to SSR, by agreeing a SSR Strategy in June 2002.³² In November 2003, DFID, the Foreign Office and the Ministry of Defence issued *Security Sector Reform Policy Brief*. The policy brief defined SSR, explained its importance to the UK and outlined a 'joined up approach' to SSR on the part of the UK government.³³ The 2008-11 Public Service Agreement (PSA) for conflict mandates increased DFID and CPP investment in countries where security is a priority. The emphasis of this work is to be on: 1) strengthening safety, security and access to justice; 2) promoting SSR; 3) reducing small arms and light weapons proliferation; and 4) supporting disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration, grassroots peacebuilding and initiatives to tackle social exclusion and radicalisation.³⁴

The SSR Strategy was initially implemented through the UK's Global Conflict Prevention Pool (GCPP), which, along with the Africa Conflict Prevention Pool (ACPP), combined the resources of several government departments to support a variety of activities intended to promote conflict reduction.³⁵ Recent reviews of the security and justice work of the two pools have confirmed the British Government's position as 'market leader' in SSR and document the steps that the UK has taken to implementing a whole-of-government approach to SSR. They also demonstrated that much UK SSR work is not as well joined up as it might be.³⁶

In April 2008, the ACPP and the GCPP were merged into a new Conflict Prevention Pool (CPP), and the SSR Strategy was merged with the Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) Strategy to become the Security and Small Arms Control (SSAC) programme. At the same time, the UK created the Stabilisation Assistance Fund (SAF) for 'conflict stabilization activity in volatile or hostile areas'³⁷. This was a response to the immense needs generated by engagement in Afghanistan and Iraq, which was placing increasing demands on GCPP resources. The SAF was financed partly from resources that would otherwise have been

³² Joint FCO, DFID, MOD Paper, 'Strategy for Security Sector Reform', June 12, 2002.

³³ *Security Sector Reform Policy Brief*, November 2003, <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/security-sector-brief.pdf>.

³⁴ HM Government, *PSA Delivery Agreement 30: Reduce the impact of conflict through enhanced UK and international efforts*, revised November 2007, para 3.56, pp. 16-17.

³⁵ The two Conflict Prevention Pools were evaluated in 2003/2004. The evaluation of the SSR Strategy can be found at: http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Pubs/files/ev_647a.pdf.

³⁶ The security and justice work of the ACPP was reviewed in 2006/07: Nicole Ball, Piet Biesheuvel, Tom Hamilton-Baillie, and 'Funmi Olonisakin *Security and Justice Sector Reform Programming in Africa*, DFID Evaluation Working Paper no. 23, April 2007. The GCPP's SSR work was reviewed in 2007/08: Nicole Ball and Luc van de Goor, *Promoting Conflict Prevention through Security Sector Reform: Review of Spending on Security Sector Reform through the Global Conflict Prevention Pool*, Report to the Global Conflict Prevention Pool, London, June 2008, <http://www.ssrnetwork.net/documents/Publications/PromConfPrevThruSSR/GCPP%20SSR%20Report%20Final%20Apr08.pdf>

The GCPP report concluded that UK plays an important role in applying a strategic approach to SSR programming, promoting joined-up approaches, influencing partner governments and other members of the international community and seeking to co-ordinate international SSR efforts.

³⁷ SAF 'will take on the responsibilities currently handled by the Global Conflict Prevention Pool for civil effect in the operational theatres of Iraq and Afghanistan, allowing the new single Conflict Prevention Pool to refocus on prevention activity in other parts of the world.' HM Treasury, *Meeting the aspirations of the British People: 2007 Pre-Budget Report and Comprehensive Spending Review*, CM 7227, London: The Stationery Office, October 2007, p. 129.

allocated to the CPP and partly from Ministry of Defence (MOD) resources.

It is particularly important to note that as a result of the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review, the British government decided that a significant portion of CPP resources (as well as SAF resources) will in the future need to meet the DAC criteria for Official Development Assistance (ODA) eligibility.³⁸ The two pools had previously been viewed by other donors and by many recipients as a highly flexible, relatively rapidly disbursing funding mechanism that could finance activities, particularly in the security sphere, that other development donors could not or would not support. This decision could potentially undermine the flexibility of CPP and SAF financing but it could also potentially provide incentives for more comprehensive and integrated SSR programming.³⁹

The UK also created the Security Sector Development Team (SSDAT), originally known as the Defence Advisory Team (DAT). Initially the SSDAT's institutional home was the Ministry of Defence but early on it began drawing on defence, policing, justice, intelligence, and governance expertise.⁴⁰ SSDAT is now a tri-departmental unit, co-located since late 2007 at DFID headquarters in London with the Stabilisation Unit. The SSDAT has pioneered a facilitative approach to strengthening democratic security-sector governance. It bases all activities on a detailed in-country analysis. One of its core operating principles is: 'Assisting and facilitating, not doing, through the provision of processes, frameworks and methodologies in order to ensure local ownership and building increased future capacity in the customer.'⁴¹

Other DAC Member governments have shown considerable interest in the SSDAT and in the UK's conflict prevention pools, but only the Netherlands has taken significant steps to develop its capacity to support SSR work. Since 2004, the Directorate of Development Cooperation and the Directorate of Security Affairs in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs have pooled resources to create the Stability Fund. The Fund's objective is to support activities that are 'at the interface of peace, security and development.'⁴² The Stability Fund supports work that is intended to

³⁸ Basic information on ODA eligibility can be found in OECD Development Assistance Committee, '[DAC Statistical Reporting Directive](#),' DCD/DAC(2007)34, 6 April 2007, pp. 13-14. When it comes to designing projects that are ODA eligible, there are many nuances that become essential. For example, only 6 percent of resources allocated to UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) activities can be counted as ODA. This means that only 6 percent of the funds the UK spent to help the UN as a whole develop an SSR approach can be counted as ODA because DPKO led on this work. To take another example, civilian assistance to MODs is allowable if it is part of a broad based SSR programme. But this type of assistance may in fact be an entry point for such a comprehensive programme and thus need to precede the development of such a programme.

³⁹ Ball and van de Goor, *Promoting Conflict Prevention through Security Sector Reform*, p. 17.

⁴⁰ Information on the SSDAT team is found on the web at: <http://www.mod.uk/issues/cooperation/ssdat/>.

⁴¹ Nigel Fuller, Annual Report 2002/03, Swindon (UK): Defence Advisory Team, 2003, para 13.

⁴² See, "Dutch Plan links peacekeeping to development policy," *Humanitarian Affairs Review*, Autumn 2004, <http://www.humanitarian-review.org/upload/pdf/PeaceandSecurityEnglishFinal.pdf>. The Stability Fund was allocated €64 million in 2004 and €110 million in 2005. Some €93 million were budgeted for 2006. It is anticipated that from 2007 onwards, the Fund will receive €77 million per year, although it has not been possible to obtain information on current levels of funding. Nicole Metz,

create a secure environment in which development can occur. The cross-ministerial Steering Group on Peace and Reconstruction advises on the use of Fund resources, including the countries or regions where funds will be allocated.

Since 2008, a number of other steps have been taken to move towards a whole-of-government approach on security issues. A Steering Group on Security Cooperation and Reconstruction was formed with representation from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs (including Development Cooperation), Defence, Interior (including the police), Justice, Finance and Economic Affairs. At present, the Netherlands does not have a formal SSR policy, but there is a working document drafted by the MFA and MOD that forms the basis for policy or strategy papers on a range of SSR topics commissioned by the Steering Group and which informs SSR decision-making.

In addition, the Peace-building and Stabilization Unit was established which will work closely with regional bureaus to deepen Dutch engagement in key fragile states and which reports both to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister for Development Cooperation. It is involved in identifying specific SSR activities for the Netherlands by engaging in field missions, scoping exercises, and similar activities. Geographic focal areas are the African Great Lakes region, the Horn, Western Balkans, and Afghanistan. While there have been military advisors seconded to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 2004 (serving both the Minister for Development Cooperation and the Minister of Foreign Affairs) the intention is to have them sit inside the PSU alongside a police adviser. Since January 2005 a development advisor has been seconded to the MOD.

Following its own review of past Dutch SSR interventions, the MFA has decided that these have been too small, not sufficiently strategic in nature and thus unsustainable. The objective is therefore to focus future SSR work on a smaller number of countries, to move to larger scale and more sustainable programming (comprising training, policy support, and the provision of materiel/equipment and infrastructure) and to more systematically involve other relevant government ministries in programming where possible and useful.⁴³ Starting with Burundi, the programme of work is aimed at the military, the police and external accountability for the security sector.

United States work on SSR has been driven in large part by the US Department of Defense and has been carried out, to a significant degree, by

⁴³ 'Netherlands: Mutual interests, mutual responsibilities', 2004, <http://www.realityofaid.org/roareport.php?table=roa2004&id=85>. The Fund's Steering Committee determines whether an activity is ODA-eligible or not.

⁴³ The process of developing longer term security and justice programming is discussed in Nicole Ball, Eric Scheye and Luc van de Goor, *From Project to Program: Effective Programming for Security and Justice*, The Hague: Conflict Research Unit, Clingendael Security and Conflict Programme, Clingendael Institute, December 2007, http://www.clingendael.nl/publications/2007/20071211_cru_occ_ball.pdf.

contractors. The State Department's Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (CRS) co-ordinates civilian activities relating to reconstruction and stabilization in conflict-affected countries. . This office draws on staff from the US Departments of State and Defense (DOD) and USAID but has no pooled resources at its disposal.⁴⁴ Although its mandate is much broader, SSR is an explicit area of interest.⁴⁵ One of the tasks of CRS is to lead an interagency effort to develop a model for civilian teams that can deploy together or, when needed, embed with the military and establish a decentralized presence to undertake stabilization activities. When deployed with the military, these teams will provide civilian leadership in parallel with military operations.

Lastly, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have long been reticent to engage in security-related work. However, both hold observer status in the DAC and participated in the meetings of the DAC Network on Conflict, Peace and Development Co-operation which has been the locus of DAC SSR activity. Both the IMF and the World Bank have increasingly come to realize that security is essential for sustainable development. While neither organisation is deeply engaged in security-related work, the World Bank in particular has begun to expand the circumstances in which the Bank will engage in work related to the security sector. This shift has been manifest in three separate but inter-related areas: a) the Bank's new emergency response policy, b) its increasing emphasis on governance and c) its evolving approach to incorporating conflict into Poverty Reduction Strategies.⁴⁶

As part of the process of developing a new operational policy on a rapid Bank response to crises and emergencies, known as OP 8.00, the Bank's General Counsel issued an opinion on peace-building, security and relief activities.⁴⁷ This underscored the importance of focusing on the Bank's 'core development and economic competence' (support for infrastructure, public financial management and capacity building). At the same time, the General Counsel recognised the need

⁴⁴ Indeed, CRS has had only modest resources at its disposal since its creation in July 2004. The FY 2006 budget contains a request for \$124.1 m. Stephen D. Krasner and Carlos Pascual, 'Addressing State Failure', *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 84, no. 4 (July/August 2005). It appears that DOD will provide CRS with some financial assistance during the coming year. Personal communication, October 24, 2005. It is unclear, however, precisely what mechanism will be employed to achieve this transfer.

⁴⁵ Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization, <http://www.state.gov/s/crs/> and Department of State, Fact Sheet, Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization, March 11, 2005, <http://www.state.gov/s/crs/rls/43327.htm>.

⁴⁶ Additional information on these points can be found in Nicole Ball, "World Bank/IMF: Financial and Programme Support for SSR," pp. 145-146 in *Intergovernmental Organisations and Security Sector Reform*, ed. David M. Law, Zurich: LIT Verlag for Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of the Armed Forces, 2007,

<http://se2.dcaf.ch/serviceengine/FileContent?serviceID=DCAF&fileID=BBF21715-2CAC-58BC-B9A4-98E20917A248&lng=en>.

⁴⁷ World Bank Senior Vice President and Group General Counsel, 'Legal Opinion on Peacebuilding, Security and Relief Issues under the Bank's Policy Framework for Rapid Response to Crises and Emergencies', Annex I in *Toward a New Framework for Rapid Bank Response to Crises and Emergencies*, World Bank Operations Policy and Country Services, Washington, DC: World Bank, 12 January 2007, revised March 2007, <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/PROJECTS/Resources/40940-1205169918173/Rapidresponseboardpaper.pdf>. See also World Bank, 'Rapid Response to Crises and Emergencies', in *The World Bank Operational Manual: Operational Policies*, OP 8.00, Washington, DC: World Bank, March 2007, <http://go.worldbank.org/3MP10UIPO0>.

to support 'an integrated emergency recovery programme that includes activities in areas outside its traditional core competencies, such as peace-building, security, and relief' in collaboration with other actors, such as the preparation, appraisal and supervision of relief, security and peace-building activities.⁴⁸ While this opinion is applicable only to conflict-affected countries, some Bank officials believe that OP 8.00 and the General Counsel's opinion constitute the first steps in sketching out the boundaries of more general Bank engagement in the security sector activities.

The growing acceptance of governance as a legitimate activity for the World Bank has been reflected in its approach to military spending and in its work on the legal sector. Initially viewed as 'unproductive expenditure' that acts as a drag on economic growth, military spending is increasingly seen in the context of public financial management, one of the Bank's 'core competencies'. There is growing recognition that in most respects the military sector should be subject to the same general principles of public financial management as other parts of the public sector. The sectoral study of security carried out as part of the Afghanistan public finance management (PFM) review of 2004/2005 demonstrated both the desirability and feasibility of Bank engagement in this type of work (Box 2).⁴⁹ The legitimacy of Bank involvement in this area was strengthened by the Governance and Anti-Corruption (GAC) Strategy that it adopted in March 2007. The GAC

Box 2. Lessons from the Afghanistan PFM Review of the Security Sector

- 'PFM practices can take into consideration the most complex and confidential issues without undermining the application of fundamental principles of accountability to elected civil authorities'.
- 'There is no justification for treating the security sector as separate or sacrosanct, and not subjecting it to budgetary and fiduciary processes'.
- 'There is a strong justification for analytical work in the security sector from development and PFM perspectives'.

Source: World Bank, 'Post-Conflict Security Sector and Public Finance Management: Lessons from Afghanistan', Social Development Notes/Conflict Prevention & Reconstruction, no. 24, Washington, D.C.: World Bank, July 2006, http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2006/08/23/000090341_20060823101926/Rendered/PDF/368930SDN2401PUBLIC1.pdf.

⁴⁸ World Bank, 'Legal Opinion on Peace-building, Security and Relief Issues', para. 15. See also para. 20. The General Counsel also identified 'some noteworthy examples of support for programs that include peace-building and security dimensions, such as reintegration of disarmed ex-combatants, demining operations, and capacity building for the overall public sector including parliamentary and security sector institutions in matters of fiscal and financial management. In each of these cases, a careful assessment is made of the various legal and reputational aspects before the bank lends support' (para. 22).

⁴⁹ World Bank, Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Sector Unit, South Asia Region, *Afghanistan: Managing Public Finances for Development. Volume V: Improving Public Financial Management in the Security Sector* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 22 December 2005). This review will be updated in early 2009.

strategy identifies 'reforms to improve the capacity, transparency, and accountability of state in for the Bank's governance work.

Widening buy-in to the SSR policy agenda

In terms of widening buy-in to the SSR policy agenda, there are a number of notable achievements: the increasing use of the SSR term in the development (and increasingly security) discourse, the growing body of both policy-relevant and academic literature treating SSR-related topics, and the proliferation of internationally-supported SSR programmes in developing countries, particularly those seeking to rebuild following war. As the donors have become more interested in security sector reform, they have made more money available for research, training and other practical work. (Selected research and training activities are discussed in section 4.) While these trends are not insignificant, efforts to turn SSR policy into effective practice have been confronted by a number of significant challenges which are examined below.

Turning SSR policy into practice

There have been three core challenges in turning SSR policy into effective practice: first, mainstreaming the DAC SSR concept and policy framework across relevant actors in the SSR community; second, achieving policy coherence between development and security policies; third, the renewed emphasis on more traditional security approaches as a consequence of the 'war on terror'.

Mainstreaming SSR: OECD countries

All 23 members of the DAC and interested observers⁵⁰ endorsed the DAC SSR policy statement and paper on SSR as a DAC reference document in April 2004,⁵¹ though each country is at a different stage in developing national policy frameworks for SSR and is pursuing work in this area in different ways. Nonetheless, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that none of the DAC Member states has yet succeeded in mainstreaming SSR, either into development work or into security-related activities. The UK has, not surprisingly, come the farthest, but even there significant gaps exist in terms of implementing the various policy frameworks that exist.⁵² In most other DAC countries, SSR, as defined in the DAC

⁵⁰ The DAC is made up of 22 bilateral donors and the Commission of the European Communities. UNDP, World Bank, and IMF have observer status.

⁵¹ DAC Guidelines on *Security System Reform and Governance*, 2004.

⁵² See for example Ball and van de Goor, *Promoting Conflict Prevention through Security Sector Reform*.

policy statement and paper, has barely penetrated even the development assistance ministries, let alone the foreign affairs or security-related ministries.

The global SSR survey conducted for the DAC in 2003 suggested a number of reasons why SSR has yet to be mainstreamed in either development or security work despite the fact that development actors are increasingly engaging in security-related work and collaborating with other government agencies in the process, and five years on, these remain valid.⁵³

- The substantive focus of donor activities now goes well beyond the 1990s interest in military spending and military roles. Donors provide strong support for justice and internal security/police reforms and for activities designed to demilitarise society that developed during the 1990s. They are giving limited but growing attention to strengthening civil oversight of the security bodies and to enhancing the capacity of civil management bodies. However, donors still do very little work oriented toward non-state actors (beyond DDR programs).
- For the most part, donors seem unfamiliar with the value of activities intended to create an environment in which serious governance-oriented reforms can go forward.
- Much of the work that is carried out is *ad hoc* and not grounded in policy frameworks, either explicitly for SSR or integrated into policies for related issues such as conflict prevention, governance, democratisation, or human security.⁵⁴
- Few donor governments have formal co-ordination mechanisms aimed at developing government-wide responses to security-related issues in partner countries. In consequence, opportunities for being strategic about the work donors engage in are missed and there are not-insignificant risks that donor government departments will work at cross-purposes. This in turn makes it more difficult to achieve effective collaboration in situations where a number of donor countries and multilateral agencies are involved.

⁵³ This summary of the 2003 global SSR survey findings is drawn from Dylan Hendrickson and Nicole Ball, 'Good Practice and Working Principles in Security System Reform', report produced for the OECD DAC Network on Conflict, Peace and Development Cooperation, Sept 2003.

⁵⁴ There are, of course, very practical reasons why policy frameworks are not developed. In part DAC governments are suffering from 'policy fatigue.' In part, attempting to develop a policy framework would surface significant differences among governmental departments. While thrashing over these differences can, in theory, produce greater understanding, it can also paralyse efforts to implement SSR activities. Even the UK does not have a formal SSR policy. The approach to SSR agreed by OECD DAC governments increasingly seems to underpin thinking within HMG, but there is no formal statement of how HMG as a whole intends to take forward an SSR agenda and how the different institutional actors can contribute to achieving HMG objectives. However, the British government has committed itself to updating and reissuing the 2003 Policy Brief. 'Promoting Conflict Prevention through Security Sector Reform: Review of Spending on SSR through the Global Conflict Prevention Pool. Recommendations and HMG Responses,' p. 1, Recommendation 1.

<http://www.ssrnetwork.net/documents/Publications/PromConfPrevThruSSR/GCPPSSRreportresponse3June.pdf>

- Donors continue to have a strong preference for discrete projects rather than broader programmes and for activities with concrete outputs (a defence white paper, human-rights training for police officers) rather than process-based work (developing consensus on the need for SSR; strengthening the capacity of government officials to develop policies). This may be related to the fact that donors continue to think in short time frames and outputs rather than outcomes as well as from the absence of good benchmarks for determining progress in implementing process-based work.
- Donors prefer to work with civil society and parliaments rather than with executive branch departments or ministries. At the same time, even in these activities, many do not prioritise developing security-related capacity.

It is also clear that not all of the security work donors are engaged in actually meets the definition of 'SSR', nor is the assistance provided always in line with SSR principles.⁵⁵ Many donors (as well as other international actors) have simply re-named existing security-related activities as SSR without adequately considering what is distinctive about this agenda from a conceptual and policy perspective, and adjusting their programming accordingly. Thus, while the term 'SSR' has gained increasing currency, one can question if it has not simultaneously lost a significant portion of its meaning.

At the same time, it is important to be realistic about what can be achieved in terms of implementing an externally generated policy commitment in a short period of time. It is also important to recognize that the DAC process has enabled issues to be put on the table in at least some DAC Member states that have up to now been virtually impossible to discuss. In the United States, for example, the DAC SSR process and the cross-fertilisation of ideas from the UK that it facilitated has been helpful to those in USAID, the US Department of State and the Department of Defense who are interested in injecting governance-related issues into US development and security policy. In September 2005, for example, USAID signed a contract for work on developing and implementing an SSR framework to be overseen by USAID's Office of Democracy and Governance. An explicit requirement of this work was to learn from other DAC countries and develop collaborative methods of working. In November 2005, USAID held a workshop for officials from USAID, the State Department and DOD, where, among other things, the UK experience was examined with input from UK officials.⁵⁶ Additionally, USAID, the Department of State and DOD established an informal working group on SSR in 2005 that now includes a representative from the

⁵⁵ An important factor is the impact of the 'war on terror', which is discussed below.

⁵⁶ Authors' interviews, 2003-2004, and USAID, Statement of Work for a Task Order under the USAID/DCHA/DG Building Recovery and Reform through Democratic Governance (BRDG) IQC – Support to the Development of USAID's New Security Sector Reform (SSR) Program, September 2005.

Department of Justice. A DOD representative of the group noted that DOD's interest in SSR was stimulated by the 2004 DAC Guidelines, which gave them a better understanding of the need to give attention to institution building and justice. The 2008 Army Field Manual on Stability Operations contains a chapter on SSR that draws extensively from DAC documents.⁵⁷

Mainstreaming SSR: Non-OECD countries

In Africa, Asia, Central-Eastern Europe and Latin America, SSR – in the DAC sense of the word – remains peripheral to most government reform agendas, regional and subregional political, security and economic bodies, and civil society.⁵⁸ The DAC's Global SSR survey found that considerable security-related work is underway in these regions. Some of this work can be characterised as 'security-sector reform' – efforts aimed at improving democratic security-sector accountability and transparency – but much of it is more narrowly focused on strengthening the capacity of state security services to carry out their core functions. Even when the stated objective of the work is to strengthen security-sector governance, some of the reforms carried out in these regions actually *reduce* accountability and transparency within the security sector. This is often the outcome of reforms undertaken in conflict-affected or insecure countries, where the perceived urgency to bolster state security forces by increasing their operational effectiveness takes precedence over efforts to strengthen civil management bodies.

In view of the local and regional security environment in many developing and transition countries, the focus on improving operational effectiveness of the security services is not surprising. Regional conflicts, civil wars, transnational criminality and rising local criminal activities have seriously eroded the physical safety of people throughout the world and undermined the state's monopoly over the use of force. Additionally, the political environment in many of these countries, where the security services – particularly the military – are essential to the ability of political élites to gain and retain power, is also not conducive to building a constituency for strengthening democratic accountability of the security sector. What is more, as the Africa survey noted, the significant increase in violent crimes in many parts of the world in recent years – often in conjunction with

⁵⁷ United States, Headquarters, Department of the Army, *Stability Operations*, FM 3-07, October 2008, Chapter 6, <http://usacac.army.mil/cac2/Repository/FM307/FM3-07.pdf>.

⁵⁸ These were the key conclusions of a Global SSR Survey sponsored by the OECD-DAC, which was carried out between 2002-04, and remain largely applicable in 2008. See Hendrickson, "A Global Survey of Security Sector Reform: Key Findings and the Implications for Donors". URL: <http://www.securityanddevelopment.org/pdf/CSDG%20Papers%20Number%202.pdf>

efforts at democratisation – may be making members of the public more tolerant of questionable behaviour by security forces.⁵⁹

Populations in these countries frequently rely on traditional and non-state actors to reduce insecurity and obtain justice. These actors are only infrequently taken into account by SSR programming, despite the fact that they are frequently seen as more legitimate by the population.⁶⁰ In part this is because the relationship between the central government and its security services and justice system, on the one hand, and the traditional and non-state providers of security and justice can be quite complex.

The most significant ‘carrot’ available to encourage governments in non-OECD countries to engage in SSR has been the opportunity for former communist states to join NATO and the European Union, but that of course is limited to the Euro-Atlantic zone. The problem facing those who would promote governance-related reforms outside the Euro-Atlantic zone is that there are no similar incentives available to spur interest in significant reform processes.⁶¹ In these circumstances, the best prospects for reform will stem from the strengthening of local constituencies that can demand change in how the security sector is governed. The empowering of local reformers (in government, in external accountability bodies, and within civil society) is a long-term process that is inherently political and that will not necessarily result in the types of changes that are foreseen by the donor SSR agenda.

Achieving policy coherence

The difficulty of aligning OECD assistance in the security domain with the needs of partner countries reflects the formidable difficulties of harmonising the policies and programmes of the wide array of international actors, so as to maximise their impact and to ensure they do not work at cross-purposes⁶². Among the key issues are:⁶³

- *Structural tensions between development, security and foreign policies in donor countries.* There is now widespread agreement at the rhetorical level that

⁵⁹Eboe Hutchful and ‘Kayode Fayemi, ‘Security System Reform in Africa’ URL: <http://www.securityanddevelopment.org/pdf/CSDG%20Papers%20Number%203.pdf>

⁶⁰ Bruce Baker and Eric Scheye, ‘Multi-layered Justice and Security Delivery in Post-Conflict and Fragile States, *Conflict, Security and Development*, Vol. 7, Issue 4, December 2007, pp.503-28.

⁶¹ Hendrickson and Karkoszka, ‘The Challenge of Security Sector Reform.’ URL: <http://www.securityanddevelopment.org/pdf/CSDG%20Papers%20Number%201.pdf>

⁶² Robert Picciotto, ed., ‘Striking A New Balance: Donor Policy Coherence and Development Co-operation in Difficult Environments, Background paper for the Senior Forum on *Development Effectiveness in Fragile States*, Lancaster House, London, 13-14 January 2005, prepared by King’s College London and the Global Policy Project.

⁶³ Dylan Hendrickson (ed.), ‘How Can Development and Security Assistance Enable Each Other’, Background paper prepared for the DFID Security and Development Strategy, King’s College London, December 2004.

security sector reform requires a ‘whole-of-government’ approach. Implementing such an approach is extremely difficult. A major reason for this is that donor government development, security and foreign policies often have mutually exclusive objectives and donor governments are disinclined, for various reasons, to make the effort to take steps to make these policies mutually supportive.

The British government has made more progress toward ‘joining up’ the security/development interface than almost any other bilateral donor, for instance through the establishment of the Global Conflict Prevention and Africa Conflict Prevention Pools. Even so, co-ordination among DFID, FCO and MoD and between them and other relevant Departments, like the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), has not always proved easy. Nor has it been easy to translate into collaboration in-country between defence advisors, diplomats, trade missions and DFID governance advisors, and other relevant actors.

While the precise form of intra-governmental collaboration can be expected to vary among donor countries, DAC members would be well advised to examine the UK’s experience in this regard. It is particularly important to understand that pooled funding can be a useful tool to support joined up strategies, but pooled funding by itself will not produce coherent programming in support of SSR. Other factors such as donor government-wide strategies for each country, donor government SSR strategies, clear leadership within donor country teams, evidence based programming, strong monitoring of activities and flexibility to adjust programming as required by circumstances are also extremely important.⁶⁴

- *Lack of coherence between the different security and development policy instruments utilised by donors and the international financial institutions (IFIs), which tend to generate discordant policy prescriptions, tugging in different directions. Donors have devoted an enormous amount of effort to resolving the inherent tensions between macroeconomic policies for stabilisation and structural adjustment on the one hand and poverty-reduction on the other, with uneven success. Relatively less effort so far has been put into ensuring that donor policy instruments for peace and stability – like DDR or SSR - harmonise with each other, with economic policy instruments or with poverty reduction efforts.*⁶⁵
- *Potential conflicts of interest between donor policies and programmes for SSR and*

⁶⁴ Ball and van de Goor, *Promoting Conflict Prevention through Security Sector Reform*.

⁶⁵ Thus, for example, the SSR process foreseen by the US Security Coordinator for West Bank and Gaza has fiscal implications that run directly counter to the deficit reduction and fiscal stabilisation expectations of the IFIs and a number of other development donors.

government support for commercial activities in conflict-torn states, like arms sales or extractive industries, which often involve national security actors. These conflicts of interest become more apparent in countries that are of strategic interest to a donor country for either security or commercial reasons. A decision may then be made to have separate policy frameworks for SSR and other aspects of security assistance that are tied to strategic concerns like the war-on-terror or defence interests.

- *The difficulties of co-ordinating programmes and operations among several different donors and international agencies involved in SSR.* The difficulties described above tend to increase exponentially when several donor countries and international agencies are involved, as in virtually all conflict and post-conflict situations. The United Nations has formal responsibility for co-ordination in most humanitarian interventions, but its capacity to ensure effective co-operation on SSR to which it is a relatively newcomer is limited and varies from case to case. In some instances it has worked alongside other layers of international organisation, like NATO, OSCE, or the EU. In others *de facto* co-ordination has been left to 'coalitions of the willing', and/or to individual lead nations like the UK in Sierra Leone or France in the Ivory Coast. In yet other cases, regional organisations like the AU, ECOWAS and SADC in Africa, or regional powers like Australia in East Timor or South Africa in Burundi have played an increasingly important role.
- *Tensions between the lead role of individual donors (and of coalitions of the willing) and more multilateral approaches.* Buy-in by major world powers and indeed by regional powers lends SSR programmes greater political and military clout. But there are also potential costs. Intervening powers may prioritise their own national interests above those of other international stakeholders and over the requirements of security reforms in conflict-torn countries themselves, as the case of the US in Afghanistan discussed in the following section underscores. Lack of an appropriate multilateral framework may also reduce international and regional legitimacy, which can be especially damaging, when security problems interconnect across regional boundaries, as in the Balkans, the African Great Lakes or the Middle East.

'War-on-terror' approaches to security

Concerns about providing people-centred security assistance that supports, rather than hinders, sustainable development and poverty reduction had scarcely arrived on the international agenda when the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 occurred. Progress toward the development of more holistic, governance-oriented programmes of assistance to the security sector was in its infancy. The post-9/11

security agenda has thrown a spotlight on the relationship between counter-terrorism and development policy, including both official development assistance and the broader instruments of development co-operation, such as trade and political co-operation. This has introduced both a heightened attention to security issues in donor discourse and substantive shifts in aid conditionality and spending in terms of country, regional and sector allocation.

Since late 2001, there has been huge pressure to make security the key foreign policy objective of donor countries, in the process subordinating trade and development policy. Recent experiences also suggest that, in doing so, there is a danger is that the interests of poorer countries will be conflated with the interests of richer countries, when in fact the problems that most concern richer countries (such as terrorism) are not always a priority concern for their development partners in the face of huge poverty reduction challenges.

The emphasis on counter-terrorism in the security policies and programs of OECD countries has placed the SSR agenda under considerable pressure. In particular, pressures from OECD countries to reshape the security services – especially intelligence services and internal security bodies – to meet the demands of the ‘war on terror’ is elevating operational effectiveness above the development of democratic accountability and oversight mechanisms.

While the ‘war on terror’ is being fought on many fronts, a central element of the strategy is to strengthen transnational intelligence and law-enforcement co-operation and military action. Many of the less developed states that have joined the ‘coalition against terrorism’ and that are seen to harbour political elements that may be a threat to the major Western powers have received increased support to bolster their intelligence and internal security capacity. Even those that are not necessarily obvious havens of potentially anti-Western groups can also be tempted to ‘join up’ since, as Eboe Hutchful has observed, ‘the war on terror approach...is politically less demanding and may also carry more tangible benefits’ than the SSR approach.⁶⁶ These reforms may not be consistent with meaningful SSR since significant trade-offs can be expected between the initial primary focus on strengthening effectiveness and the longer-term goal of improving transparency and accountability in the security sector. In many cases, SSR would directly curtail the appreciable counter-terrorism capabilities of these states, including powers of arrest and surveillance authority.

The actions of the US government in Afghanistan illustrate this situation particularly well. During the Taliban period, the power of the regional commanders had been severely eroded, although they continued to have fighters at their disposal. In order to minimise the number of US casualties during fighting in Afghanistan, the US used some of these troops as proxy fighters and rewarded

⁶⁶ Eboe Hutchful, personal communication, October 25, 2005.

commanders who did not fight against Coalition forces or seek to prevent the provisional government from establishing itself in Kabul in 2001. This enabled the commanders to rebuild their regional power bases and to threaten the central government's authority. Reducing the power of these commanders became the central concern of the government in Kabul in 2002, and difficulties in achieving this objective have slowed the extension of state authority outside Kabul, especially in rural areas. Thus, the short-term objective of preventing US casualties in the war against al Qaeda and the Taliban undermined its longer-term objective of creating a stable state that would no longer provide a haven for international terrorism.⁶⁷

It is clear, furthermore, that Afghanistan is but one of the countries in which counter-terrorism concerns have overtaken accountability or even effectiveness concerns in US security assistance. A study of 47 low-income, poorly performing states carried out in 2002-2004 found that those countries that were considered major US allies in the 'war on terror' received 90 percent of the military and police aid provided by the US to that group of countries between 2000 and 2004.⁶⁸ Much of this aid closely resembles the assistance that Washington provided to developing-world allies at the height of the Cold War. That is to say, assistance to improve the accountability of the security services and their adherence to the rule of law is of essentially no concern.

This is highly problematic, since these states have extensive records of repression of civil and political liberties, human-rights violations, and economic impunity on the part of military élites – precisely the sorts of behaviours that the emphasis on accountability and rule of law was meant to address. Many other countries receiving US security assistance confront the same problems.

The 'war on terror' has heightened concerns over the potential for the marginalisation of human rights in favour of security and policy objectives. Anti-terrorism measures have been regarded as repressive in cases where legislation has removed the basic rights of citizens, for example in implementing increased detention times for terror suspects in order to carry out investigations or in only allowing contact with approved lawyers. In various countries where police have been given wider powers of search and detention the criticism has been made that

⁶⁷ It is interesting to note that at a seminar on the US experience with Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) at the US Institute of Peace in Washington, DC, on October 26, 2005, Lieutenant General David Barno, former commanding general of the Combined Forces Command-Afghanistan, identified three main strands of US security policy in Afghanistan which address: 1) the leadership of terrorist organizations; 2) networks of terrorists; and 3) the 'centrifugal forces of Afghanistan', that is, 'warlords, drugs and factionalism'. In his comments at the same event, former Afghanistan Minister of Interior Ali Jalali focused almost exclusively on the third set of problems and noted on several occasions that it was the priorities of the 'customer, not the provider' that should drive the actions of PRTs.

⁶⁸ Nicole Ball and Adam Isacson, 'US Military and Police Assistance to Poorly Performing States,' Chapter 13 in *Short of the Goal*, Nancy Birdsall, Milan Vaishnav and Robert L. Ayres, eds., Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution Press for the Center for Global Development, 2006, p. 414, <http://www.cgdev.org/doc/shortofthegoal/chap13.pdf>. Ninety-three percent of the assistance to the 'war on terror' subgroup went to Afghanistan and Pakistan (p. 416).

this has helped facilitate the targeting of minorities and political opponents, profiting from the general lack of a clear definition of 'terrorism'. There are also concerns that under pressure to combat and contain terrorism human rights abuses may be more widely tolerated by the international community.⁶⁹

By invoking a need for immediate 'emergency' action, governments have sometimes bypassed parliamentary and legal processes, with contravention of local national laws being justified by the need to collaborate in the global fight against terror⁷⁰. Criticism has also been levelled at various governments concerning a perceived growth in arms sales and military aid, particularly to regimes with poor human rights records. Through pursuing the international agenda of counter-terrorism there have been concerns that global actors have allowed this mission to override other agendas, particularly where alliances have been formed with regimes over which concerns have been voiced regarding human rights abuses.

Even where efforts to establish democratic security sector governance are nominally on the agenda, they have increasingly sidelined by the post-September 2001 emphasis on counter-terrorism. Once again, Afghanistan illustrates this point only too well. The stated objective of security-sector reform in Afghanistan is to create effective and accountable security institutions. However, rebuilding the operational capacity of the army and the police service and creating special security units such as the counter-narcotics police have had far higher priority than creating the capacity for effective civil management and oversight of these bodies or ensuring that the security bodies created are affordable. The Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit in Kabul noted in June 2004:

Still largely unaddressed are critical issues of good governance and the institutionalisation of civilian control over the use of force, over state resources, and over the appointment of senior government officials, as well as strengthening of governmental and non-governmental oversight.... Without a sustained commitment to ensure that the law assumes a dominant role in restricting government and security-force behaviour, government security forces may become the core areas of insecurity for the Afghan public.⁷¹

⁶⁹ See for instance, Amnesty International, *Annual Report 2003: human rights threatened by 'war on terror'* www.amnesty.org.uk/deliver?document=14553; Human Rights Watch, October 2003, *Pakistan: Four Years after the Coup, Rights Abuses abound*; Human Rights Watch, letter to Commonwealth Members on the Eve of CHOGM, November 2003.

⁷⁰ While the counter-terrorism agenda has been pursued with greater intensity since 9/11, it is by no means a new phenomenon. Extraordinary powers have been a feature of many regimes for many years, as evidenced not least of all in Northern Ireland during the 1970s and 1980s where anti-terrorist concerns dominated attempts to make the security sector answerable to the rule of law or democratic principles. Personal communication, Paddy Hillyard.

⁷¹ Michael Bhatia, Kevin Lanigan and Philip Wilkinson, *Minimal Investments, Minimal Results: The Failure of Security Policy in Afghanistan*, AREU Briefing Paper, June 2004, p. 15, http://www.areas.org.af/download_pub.asp?id=193.

From the perspective of many developing and transition countries that are being strongly encouraged to support the war-on-terror, there is a clear conflict between objectives and means. Many of these countries are aid-dependent and face significant external constraints on how they budget and manage resources, particularly in the security sector. Even as they come under persistent pressure from some donors to reduce security spending, they are being urged by other international partners to bolster their internal security and intelligence capacities.

These developments raise the spectre of a return to cold war security thinking, which revolved around regime security. A significant number of states have found it necessary to curtail civil rights. There are corresponding pressures for less scrutiny by elected officials over the plans, budgets and operations of state security organs. Increasingly centralised and strengthened security sectors cannot help but exert greater influence over states' security policy and budgetary decisions. This will undermine the complementarities of development and security instruments, and make both less effective than they might otherwise be in promoting human security goals.

At the same time, the difficulties faced by the US and its allies in 'democratising' Iraq and freeing Afghanistan from 'terrorists', coupled with strong US support for peaceful 'revolutions' in Georgia and Ukraine, raise the question: Is the new 'cold war' already beginning to wane, with a corresponding softening of the emphasis on 'hard' security? In other words, is the pendulum swinging away from 'hard' security back toward a more people-centred, democratic governance-based approach to security? The problem is that the pendulum scarcely moved in the direction of people-centred, democratic governance-based security in the first place, making it difficult to speak of it swinging 'back'.

The term 'security sector reform' is now applied to anything and everything related to security. Thus, the employees of DynCorps – not an organisation renowned for its devotion to democratic security sector governance – who were engaged in restructuring the Liberian armed forces drove around Monrovia in vehicles with license plates that proclaim 'SSR-1', SSR-2, wearing caps emblazoned with the logo 'SSR'. As one UK official who strongly supports a governance orientation to SSR ruefully commented about SSR work in general in mid-2005, 'It is virtually all train-and-equip'.⁷² The fact that DFID felt compelled to put out a report on security and development in early 2005 to make the case for its continued place at the table in UK security discussions is yet another sign that 'hard' security approaches are alive and well.⁷³

⁷² Personal communication to N. Ball, August 2005.

⁷³ DFID, *Fighting Poverty to Build a Safer World: A Strategy for Security and Development*, March 2005, www.dfid.gov.uk

This raises an important question about the future of the SSR concept and whether it remains useful for those promoting a more holistic-based approach to security. To date, the primary utility of SSR for practitioners has been to bring together members of different policy communities in a dialogue and shared analysis about ways to link security and development issues (and activities). This remains a pressing priority. While current trends highlight the risks of the SSR term being co-opted by the 'hard' security community, it would be counter-productive to abandon the concept given its growing profile in the aid world. There is therefore, arguably, a stronger case to focus on re-energising the concept by stimulating greater debate on the core principles which underpin the SSR concept, and how these principles apply to the very different contexts in which SSR is being 'sold' or undertaken. This debate should be accompanied by attempts to more effectively institutionalise SSR thinking in the practice of international assistance in both the development and security spheres.

Chapter 4

Assessment of Current SSR Research

This section first looks at some of the factors that affect the influence that research has had on SSR policy. It then examines a number of noteworthy research initiatives in the field of SSR and potential new SSR research avenues where there is scope for fruitful collaboration between Northern funders and researchers working in concert with institutions located in the South. Finally, we identify a number of specific opportunities for IDRC to support SSR research in developing countries as well as potential synergies with other research donors working in the SSR domain.

Challenges of bridging research and policy

It is important from the outset to distinguish between SSR research – which has largely catered to the needs of international donor organisations working in the justice and security domain – and more empirical research on justice and security issues, including civil-military relations, of which there is a long-standing academic tradition, including in developing countries. These two strands of research have often been conducted in parallel, though there are some positive signs of greater convergence between the two strands as recognition grows of the need for the SSR policy agenda to be informed by better empirical analysis. There are three factors that have limited the impact which research has had on SSR policy and practice, which will be discussed in turn below. They are: 1) the dominance of donor-driven research priorities; 2) the strong focus on normative frameworks; and 3) the weakness of research capacity in reforming countries.

Donor-driven research priorities

First, the SSR agenda emerged within donor policy circles. As a result, most research that comes under the SSR heading has been driven or heavily influenced by the policy-related concerns of donor funding agencies. While applied research

is not, in and of itself, undesirable, the bureaucratic imperative within aid agencies to develop and implement SSR programmes can create disincentives to commission research that might either slow down implementation of a programme, or call into question the basic approach. SSR is a key transition issue in many conflict-affected societies and this has often increased the pressure on aid agencies to act before there is an adequate understanding of the context in which programmes are developed or implemented. Aid agencies have sought to gain a place 'at the table' in security debates with other actors, the military in particular, by developing policy frameworks on SSR that carve out a niche for themselves. This policy work, however, has not always taken sufficiently into account the complexities of working in the security domain. While there is a growing body of analysis and research that deals with these complexities, it tends not to come in easily digestible packets which busy aid bureaucracies can feed into the policy process.

On the positive side, a number of countries such as the UK, Germany, the Netherlands, Canada, Norway and the United States have turned to external institutions in the academic and policy world to advise them on their SSR work.⁷⁴ The UK, and especially DFID, for instance, has relied heavily on inputs from Bradford University, Cranfield University, the Institute of Development Studies, and the Conflict, Security and Development Group at King's College London to inform its policy work as well as a broad range of consultants in other countries. These institutions and consultants have provided a variety of inputs including policy advice, evaluations, research and training, that are tightly linked to UK policy objectives. With very few exceptions to date have any of these institutions conducted longer-term empirical research on SSR issues that has been funded by DFID.

The same constraints are faced by Clingendael in The Netherlands, whose research output in this area is now virtually entirely geared towards supporting the policy initiatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defence. This makes it difficult to adequately examine and test the policy recommendations that are being provided to governments.

Excessive focus on normative frameworks

Second, much of what has been characterised as SSR 'research' has in fact been more influenced by a normative framework and a standard set of assumptions about how 'reforming' countries should organise and operate their security sectors. The strong emphasis on norms such as democratisation, civilian control of

⁷⁴ The US obtains significant support from consulting firms as well.

the military, a clear division between internal and external security functions and a strong civil society role in management of security policy can detract from good empirical analysis of how security institutions actually function. As a consequence, despite the fact that SSR research is heavily influenced by holistic concepts of security and often involves developing country researchers, it has often been insufficiently sensitive to the complex institutional and political dynamics that affect reform processes.

Part of the problem is that the emerging SSR literature is often misleadingly optimistic about the prospects for change along the lines mapped out. It has been noted that the civil-military relations literature that was the primary influence on security thinking during the 1970s and 1980s was more cynical and pessimistic than the SSR literature of today about prospects for achieving meaningful reform.⁷⁵ This is due in no small part to its focus on power relations, often absent from the contemporary SSR debate. Policy discussions tend to be prescriptive (and technical) in nature, focusing more on outcomes and modalities for delivering assistance, rather than on obstacles to change.⁷⁶ In the process, a number of cherished assumptions about how societies function are not critically examined.

The tendency is to think in terms of the state as the *primary* security actor whether or not it actually has – or ever did have – a monopoly of violence, to assume that the civilian policy sectors have more of an influence over security policymaking than they actually do, or is possible, given the prevailing political culture, and to downplay the impact of informal norms and practices in security policymaking processes. The emergence of the SSR agenda within the development policy community, where political economy analysis has often not been an integral part of the programming process, has exacerbated this problem. Again, there are exceptions: starting several years ago DFID, for instance, introduced ‘drivers of change’ analysis into planning for all of its country programmes which has sought to engage with longer-term structural and political dynamics which will affect development processes and DFID programmes.⁷⁷

A failure to challenge easy assumptions about how states work increases the chances that inappropriate one-size-fits-all models to SSR will be employed. The tendency to view the security reform project in developing countries through the ‘SSR’ lens can of course result in lack of recognition that most countries have been in the past and continue to be engaged in efforts to control and restructure their security services and agencies. There has not been, as part of the donor SSR

⁷⁵ This point was made by Eboe Hutchful, ASDR, Ghana.

⁷⁶ There are of course important exceptions to this, among which Cawthra and Luckham, ed., *Governing Insecurity*.

⁷⁷ The fact that DFID, for example, had to develop the ‘Drivers of Change’ methodology, which is essentially a means of conducting a political economy analysis, is indicative of the broader problem. See, http://www.grc-exchange.org/g_themes/politicalsystems_drivers.html. It is unclear to what extent this methodology has been mainstreamed in DFID.

project, any serious attempt to describe and explain these reform processes that have been undertaken to date. Once again, of course, there is an extant body of academic literature examining these reform processes, which is not easily accessible to busy bureaucrats.⁷⁸

In the absence of specialist knowledge, there is a tendency for outsiders to approach a situation with a set of preconceived ideas about what exists, how it functions, and what is required to 'fix' it. The urgency with which external actors often set out to 'rebuild' or 'reform' the security sector may preclude asking sufficient questions about why institutions work the way they do in the first place. This can lead to a temptation to strike out in a new direction that is not in some way derived from the past. It can result in unrealistic benchmarks associated with external assistance and distract from incremental and practical ways of strengthening security sector governance. As noted in the case of Africa, which no doubt also has relevance to other regions:

...given the institutional and resource constraints that characterise African countries, there is a real possibility that the elevated benchmarks often associated with SSR will represent overkill. A set of more modest core goals, such as gradual and monitorable improvements in transparency, in sensitivity to human rights issues, and in the quality of defence and security management, would be more realistic.⁷⁹

This suggests that, within the short timeframe that characterises most donor SSR assistance programmes, there are a few effective concrete indicators that can be used to measure progress on 'reform', particularly where it comes to increasing the accountability of security forces and their responsiveness to citizen needs. At the same time, increased dialogue between security forces and civilians or a willingness on the part of a government to consult civil society in the context of a security policy review may serve to empower a broader range of security stakeholders in a way that has long-term benefits for how the security sector is governed. This question of how 'reform' can be measured is no doubt very context specific and one that deserves closer scrutiny on the part of both donors and researchers.

Need to strengthen research capacity in reforming countries

⁷⁸ For example, see M. Alagappa, ed., *Coercion and Governance: The Declining Political Role of the Military in Asia*, Stanford: University Press, 2001 and Kees Koonings and Dirk Kruijt, ed., *Political Armies: Armed Forces and Nation-Building in the Age of Democracy*, London: Zed Press, 2002.

⁷⁹ Hutchful and Fayemi, p. 87.

A third closely-related problem stems from the weakness of research capacity in many of the countries that are being targeted for reform and the paucity of donor programmes to foster research capacity which is protected from political (and donor) interference. As noted in Sections 2 and 3.1, Southern researchers and institutions have been integrally involved in development of the SSR agenda. This has been made possible in large part due to recognition among a small number of donors such as the UK, Norway, Denmark, and IDRC of the critical importance of harnessing local views and expertise.⁸⁰ Indeed, as already noted, many of these researchers had been actively involved in SSR programmes long before this issue gained prominence on the donor agendas.

Yet these local inputs have been drawn from a relatively small – albeit growing – pool of security and political analysts, and their contributions to donor policy initiatives have often not been reciprocated by serious, long-term donor investments in building the institutional capacity of the research organizations they are a part of. Given the relatively limited number of ‘SSR experts’ available, the heavy demand placed on them by international institutions, and their dependence – in many cases – on donor resources, many have lacked the time and resources to develop independent research programmes. This, combined, with the project-based approach of many donors, has made it more difficult to develop long-term research programmes and a cadre of experienced local researchers who can generate the good and detailed case material necessary to influence high level policy debates in their own and donor countries.

Yet an additional factor may be at work here. The post-Cold War political liberalisation that has created space for change in the developing and transition countries has created an incentive for practical work as opposed to basic research. The same individuals who have the requisite experience to carry out the basic research that could inform policy debates are often otherwise engaged in activities intended to move the security-sector governance agenda forward in their own countries and regions. These activities, which include both training to enhance security sector ‘literacy’ and support for policy development initiatives within governments, raise an important question: should donors focus limited resources on generating more knowledge or rather disseminating and applying what we already know through capacity building initiatives?

To an extent, the training (capacity-building) versus research issue is a false dichotomy. Ownership of the SSR concept and policy agenda by developing countries is very low.⁸¹ This is in no small part a consequence of the fact that donor and Northern institutions have generated most of the research and policy

⁸⁰ It should be noted that a number of research foundations, among which the Ford Foundation is perhaps the best example, recognize this need and have provided extensive support to research institutions in developing countries.

⁸¹ This was a key finding of the OECD-DAC sponsored Global SSR Survey. See Hendrickson, ‘Global Survey of Security Sector Reform: Key Findings and the Implications for Donors.’

paradigms in the area of SSR. This has served to limit buy-in to SSR thinking by not only governments, for whom there are often insufficient incentives to undertake SSR in the OECD-DAC sense of the word, but has also impeded the emergence of indigenous models of SSR that are more attuned to local cultural, political and institutional conditions, around which pro-reform constituencies can mobilise.

In these circumstances, then, the priority is perhaps less to disseminate more widely donor SSR concepts and research than to build a cadre of security analysts in developing countries who can generate research that is more tailored to local needs, priorities and circumstances. While there is no shortage of capacity-building initiatives in developing countries, including within the research domain, relatively few of these initiatives are targeted at SSR. In the case of the African Union, for instance, this gap is particularly problematic given the potentially important role it could play in terms of raising the profile of SSR and norm-setting across the African continent where the terrain for SSR is currently very uneven.

Existing research initiatives

Despite these constraints, the field of SSR research is expanding and diversifying. This reflects both the growing number of international actors working on SSR issues, and the varied institutional agendas that motivate their research. As already noted, not all work or research on security issues that comes under the heading of SSR or related terms adopts a holistic approach. While few of our survey respondents indicated that the war-on-terror had changed their personal research agendas, it is quite evident that it has resulted in two key changes in the broader research agenda on security issues:

- First, the increasing prioritisation of the war-on-terror as a focus of security research, which has put pressure on SSR-related themes, in the process downplaying the importance of governance and human security. In many cases, terrorism and intelligence-related topics are drawing more attention than SSR.
- Second, the linking of SSR and counter-terrorism research, as a consequence of which there has been a blurring of lines between the two agendas and a tendency in some cases to conflate the security goals of countries providing assistance with those of their partner countries.

For our purposes here, we focus on research initiatives that are consistent with the core SSR principles mapped out in Section 1. This research community remains relatively small, and still largely donor-funded. While much research is

still closely linked (with some notable exceptions) to the policy-related concerns of donors, there is a growing willingness by donors to support research agendas determined by research institutions themselves. There are three, relatively recent positive developments which we highlight here:

- First, in recognition that SSR must be internally driven and that donors must effectively tailor assistance to local needs, priorities and circumstances efforts are being made to more systematically engage researchers from developing countries in policy processes in OECD countries. While Southern researchers have been actively engaged in development of the donor policy agenda, this has been through a relatively small pool of consultants linked to a number of donor funded research institutions primarily in Africa, but to a lesser extent also in Asia and Latin America.
- Second there is a growing effort to link research with a range of policy and training initiatives in countries engaged in SSR processes. This is in recognition of the fact that research should be closely linked to the process of generating the local vision and political constituencies necessary to sustain reform processes. By involving policymakers and other personnel from security institutions in the research process, this helps to bridge the gap between research and policy.
- Third, donors are increasingly recognizing the importance of South-South exchanges. This development, which is marked by growing support by the UK Government and several other donors for South-South exchanges and research networks, reflects an understanding that Western experiences do not always provide a useful model for countries seeking to undertake SSR in conditions of resource scarcity, political tension, or institutional flux. The exchange of ideas and reform experiences across developing countries, in some cases between African, Asian and Latin American countries, can contribute to a more realistic assessment of what can be achieved in the difficult conditions which face many countries. The South-South dialogue was pioneered by two African policy research and training centres in collaboration with a UK policy research centre (Box 3).

There are a number of ongoing, donor-supported initiatives that are in line with these developments:

- The Global Facilitation Network for SSR, based at Birmingham University, whose mandate includes capacity-building in support of UK partner institutions and organisations. This output has focused on facilitating the development of regional networks of SSR organisations in Africa (the most

advanced), Asia and Latin America.⁸²

- Core funding provided by the UK Government's Africa Conflict Prevention Pool (ACPP) for the Africa Security Sector Network (ASSN). This funding, for a period of three years, will support a range of activities including training on security sector governance, research, and networking activities.
- Funding from the Government of Switzerland to establish the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of the Armed Forces (DCAF), which has developed a specialization in the area of security sector reform and governance, primarily in the transition countries of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union but increasingly in Africa as well. DCAF receives considerable support from DAC member governments, as well as non-DAC members of its Foundation Council.⁸³
- Funding by DFID for a range of studies designed to provide a basis for better-evidenced policy: 1) security decision-making processes⁸⁴; 2) role of the private sector in supporting SSR; 3) factoring SSR into peace agreements⁸⁵; 4) local ownership of SSR processes⁸⁶; 5) SSR and peace support operations; 6) demilitarising militias.
- Establishment of a Conflict and Humanitarian Fund by DFID that will provide longer-term grants to civil society organisation to conduct research on conflict and security-related themes.⁸⁷
- Development of an 'SSR Implementation Framework (IF-SSR)' for donors, supported by the OECD DAC, which will draw upon existing policy documents and assessments of SSR experiences to date.
- Support from IDRC to a number of research initiatives, primarily in Africa and Latin America, aimed at understanding how security is created and managed, and how various actors (social groups, the state, the international community) work to build – and in some circumstances undermine – security (Box 4). Several of these activities have had as a major objective the development of educational and/or training materials.⁸⁸
- Support from North American and European donor agencies to the Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales, which conducts research on a number of SSR-related activities, both through its central office and its 10 country-based academic affiliates.⁸⁹

⁸² <http://www.ssrnetwork.net>.

⁸³ <http://www.dcaf.ch/>.

⁸⁴ http://www.securityanddevelopment.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=132&catid=47&Itemid=44

⁸⁵ <http://www.ssrnetwork.net/publications/provisions.php>

⁸⁶ http://www.ssrnetwork.net/publications/no_ownersh.php

⁸⁷ <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/funding/conflict-humanitarian-faq.asp>.

⁸⁸ http://www.idrc.ca/en/ev-2839-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html.

⁸⁹ <http://www.flacso.org/>.

Box 3. Civil Society Promotes Dialogue

In December 1999, the Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD), Nigeria, in collaboration with the Centre for Defence and Security Management of Witswatersrand University (CDSM), South Africa, and the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), UK, organized a roundtable of security scholars, military and civilian defence officials, parliamentarians and civil society actors. The third in the series on the challenges of democratic control in new transitions, the roundtable focussed on the processes and mechanisms through which democratic control of the security services can be established. This was with a view to agreeing procedures for greater democratic accountability, transparency and control over security institutions – by government, parliament and the political and civil society – especially in Nigeria, which had at that time just emerged from prolonged military rule.

A follow-on meeting was held in South Africa in 2000 and similar meetings have been held in Ghana and Uganda to transmit the experience of other Africa countries to local stakeholders engaged in or contemplating reform processes.

September 2000, Johannesburg: Summary Report, <http://www.cdd.org.uk>

New avenues of research

There are a number of specific priorities that emerged from our survey:

- Critical research, especially from a Southern perspective, on the (in)coherence and problems of donor SSR programmes;
- Research on the politics and the political economy of reform processes;
- Case studies of countries that have undertaken (with or without donor assistance) security reforms, with an emphasis on understanding the factors that influenced the outcome of change processes;
- Assessments of how security establishments in OECD countries are linked with security establishments in the South, and how this shapes and conditions reform processes;
- The impact that informal institutional factors have on security decision-making processes;
- How security is viewed at the community level, and how communities prioritise different kinds of security;
- The relationship between regime types and opportunities for SSR;
- The link between the emerging developmental approach to SSR (with its emphasis on governance) and the operational requirements for restructuring and reform supported by non-development actors;
- Alternative defence and security models, postures and strategies, particularly in countries where budgetary, institutional or cultural factors do not lend themselves to the traditional Western model; two specific dimensions of this relate to understanding 1) the feasibility and application of so-called

- ‘confidence-building defence’ (also known as non-provocative defence); and 2) how collective and cooperative defence and security mechanisms at regional and sub-regional levels can be strengthened;
- Relationship between neo-liberal economic policies and justice and security policies, particularly under authoritarian regimes;
 - An agenda for SSR in industrialised countries, and how this would feed into and influence SSR in developing countries;
 - How 9/11 and the ensuing international response has affected the behaviour and priorities of security actors in developing countries, particularly those which have signed up to the ‘war-on-terror’. The critical research question here would be to what extent and how is the war-on-terror undermining recent gains in the SSR agenda?
 - Better understanding of the *spectrum* of safety and security issues facing societies, how local level problems relating to poverty and insecurity in communities is linked to the trans-national security concerns which are receiving more attention in light of 9/11;
 - Privatised violence, the role of non-state security actors in meeting community security needs, and the implications for SSR: what are the challenges of establishing a regulatory framework for private security actors at national, regional and international levels, particularly in a context where many weak states are in practice abdicating their responsibilities for regulation in favour of market forces;
 - Understanding the common ground between the SSR agenda and counter-terrorism work;
 - The effect which the HIV/AIDS pandemic is having on security establishments, in terms of both the ability of security forces to fulfil their functions and the wider challenge of resourcing the security sector as poor countries face increasing pressure to subsidise the treatment of affected personnel within ‘critical’ state sectors.

Box 4. IDRC-supported Project on Analysing the Guatemalan Security and Defence Budget

‘Military and public security expenditures have historically been among the most opaque of public policy in Guatemala. Through their provisions for fiscal reform, public participation and security sector reform, the peace accords offer a unique basis for increased citizen involvement in decisions related to security spending, for a redistribution from military to social spending, and for a re-conceptualization of security in terms of human security... This project will design an empirical research tool and methodology to enable IEPADES and other civil society organizations to understand and monitor how public funds are allocated and spent in the ‘security sector.’

Source: Analysis of the Security and Defence Budget, http://web.idrc.ca/en/ev-26393-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html.