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Security-sector  
transformation in  
post-conflict  
societies

Neil Cooper and  
Michael Pugh

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## *The Conflict, Security & Development Group*

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# Introduction

Since the end of the Cold War, the attitude of development organisations towards the security sector has changed. Previously shunned as a target for aid, personal security is now recognised as a key concern of the poor in weak states. In addition, repressive or corrupt security structures can undermine the stability crucial to maximising the benefits of aid programmes. Consequently, a number of agencies have engaged with the issue of security-sector reform.

The security sector, referred to by Nicole Ball as ‘the security family’, includes: the security forces (military, paramilitary, police), the agencies of government and parliament responsible for oversight of these forces, informal security forces, the judiciary and correction system, private security firms and civil society.<sup>1</sup> There are certainly varying definitions of the security sector in both the academic and policy literature.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, it is remarkable that the idea of the security sector as constituting something broader than solely the military has not only entered the discourse of non-governmental organisations (NGOs), academics and policy-makers, but also been largely accepted.

To date, however, much of the literature and policy on this issue has focused predominantly on disarmament and demobilisation, reform of the uniformed security branches of aid recipients and training for civil servants. Relevant though these aspects are, transforming a security sector also requires attention to the political economy of conflict, and to the socio-political dynamics of civil–military relations in war-torn societies.

We argue, therefore, that wider and more innovative reform—security-sector ‘transformation’—would be a way of addressing these issues. In this respect we concur with the general contention of the panel of experts commissioned by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic

Co-operation and Development (OECD) that supports a broad definition of the security sector and the need to address ‘the ways in which external actors undermine the security of people and states.’<sup>3</sup> This paper delineates the role that transformative strategies can play in preventing conflicts and promoting post-conflict peacebuilding. The term transformation is used here partly to reflect our view that there is a substantial deficit in current security-sector governance in post-conflict societies that necessitates going beyond reformism. However, it is also used to reflect our assertion that, for peace to be embedded, the objects of reform should not be confined merely to the security sectors of target countries but should also incorporate the broader global structures and agents that condition them. In other words, a transformative approach places as much emphasis on healing the physicians as well as the patients. It also implies a holistic approach to security, which recognises the interconnections between the security sector and other areas of the domestic, regional and global arena, most notably the economy. This indicates that strategies on other issues, for instance the economy or the environment, might be followed to complement rather than undermine transformation of the security sector. Whilst this may seem an obvious point, past practice has often produced the latter rather than the former. Further, a transformative approach would give greater weight to the mobilisation of civil society to sustain peace and control militarisation than has hitherto been the case. These goals require a range of policies which we divide into two categories: ‘structural arms control’ initiatives designed to effect change in regional or global structures, for instance by diminishing the incentives for extravagant arms acquisition; and initiatives aimed at generating socio-political safeguards against militarism within states.

The paper begins by examining the challenges to security-sector reform. These are resource manipulation; weapons’ proliferation; the emphasis on coercion in international interventions; and the diverse contexts of war-torn societies. It then outlines the evolution of aid for security sectors in conflict-prone states, and highlights the extent to which ‘security-first’ policy has been incorporated into

development assistance. The paper then expands on the concept of transformative security reform by outlining specific policies designed to promote structural arms control and socio-political safeguards against militarism. The former include tightening arms-export credits and licensing rules, taxing defence sales and controlling conflict resources, such as diaspora funds and non-military conflict goods, such as diamonds. Socio-political safeguards hinge on the transformation of civil–military relations through constitutional and capacity-building provisions to establish the supremacy of civil authorities and a separation of powers. In line with a transformative approach, it is also important to enhance civil society’s engagement in security-sector transformation, and integrate this engagement in the processes of post-conflict reconstruction.



# Chapter 1

## Challenges to security-sector reform and the evolution of aid to the security sector

Today's conflicts are driven by factors that present a number of challenges to conflict prevention and resolution. Many weak states in the developing world have essentially become 'virtual states'. Their autonomy has been undermined by globalisation, aid dependence and structural-adjustment programmes, all of which reduce the state's authority and legitimacy. This in turn presents a number of challenges to security-sector reform. These can be categorised as follows:

- resource manipulation;
- proliferation of weapons;
- contested peace;
- the structured sources of violence in conflict zones; and
- the diversity of local historical and cultural traditions.

### *Resource manipulation*

One of the defining features of contemporary conflicts is the way that local élites manipulate resources and their formal and informal economic links to extract wealth, generate political support and finance military campaigns. There is a growing literature on the role of economic motivations in generating and sustaining conflicts. For instance, in his World Bank study of civil wars Paul Collier argues that, together with low national income, the extent of a country's dependence on primary commodity exports is a significant predictor of civil wars. Such exports provide guerrilla movements with easy opportunities for wealth creation through taxation or control.<sup>4</sup> The political economy of today's

conflicts creates both local and global actors with a vested interest in perpetuating instability, lawlessness and even conflict. In addition, the economic damage caused by such actors creates an inauspicious environment in which to demobilise soldiers, tackle crime or promote social cohesion.

### *Proliferation of weapons*

The ubiquity of small arms and light weapons is another challenge. The trade in light weapons has been fuelled by the legacy of Cold War arms supplies to client states, the globalisation of the international defence industry, the increasingly porous nature of national borders and the commercial imperatives created by reduced demand and over-capacity. Consequently the easy availability of such weapons and the proximity of forces creates particularly acute security dilemmas for parties engaging in a post-conflict peace, as well as for the wider society in which cultures of lawlessness and violence may have been fostered. In this context, conventional approaches to the problem of weapons proliferation—supply-side initiatives to prevent the excessive or inappropriate acquisition of arms by actors in post-conflict states and disarmament and demobilisation agreements between warring parties—face serious challenges to their effectiveness.<sup>5</sup>

### *Contested peace*

Reforming the security sectors of conflict-torn societies requires a consideration of peace as being variable in type and quality, and therefore politically contested.<sup>6</sup> It may become a *homicidal peace* in which, as in El Salvador, ‘post-war civil killings’ exceed ‘wartime killings’.<sup>7</sup> It may also be a *pax mafiosa*, in which the ‘spoils of peace’ are distributed between world markets and regional criminals.<sup>8</sup> The reform of civil–military relations, therefore, has to occur in an environment in which peace itself does not necessarily signify the end of violence and in which peace settlements continue to be contested. At their worst, peace agreements can become temporary pauses that allow the warring parties to regroup and replen-

ish arms supplies, as in Sierra Leone, or are simply ignored, as in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Angola. In addition, those engaged in peacebuilding face the often contradictory challenges involved in simultaneously demilitarising armed factions and wider society, whilst also re-imposing effective and impartial law and order.

*Domestic structures of violence are influenced by international actors and international power relations*

In the peacebuilding norms of external agents, even wider security issues (economic and social) are framed as military and policing concerns requiring coercive means. Ironically, then the process of peacebuilding can become militarised to an extent that is counterproductive to the development of civilian governance. One can argue, for example, that throughout the history of south-east Europe, forcible external intervention has compounded the problems of ethno-nationalism by ensuring that violence lodges intractably into societies.<sup>9</sup> This interpretation suggests structures of violence in conflict zones are influenced by the local practices of international actors and the global power relations that determine them. Moreover, the political contest over the nature of a post-conflict peace is usually conceived as a tension between stability/law and order/non-violence on the one hand, versus violent restitution/recidivism/vengeance on the other. The external agencies are, of course, presented as purveyors of stability, law and order. In practice, however, their presence and their coercive techniques, if privileged over issues of accountability and justice, can foster the erosion of politics and an increase in violence.

Equally, however, the 'exit strategy mentality' that dominates international intervention in conflicts can result in arbitrary targets and deadlines being set for the completion of peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions (for example, after a precipitate election). But achieving ceasefires or holding elections does not necessarily create sufficient stability to allow positive peace processes to develop. This is inevitably a long-term process calling for flexibility and commitment. The

very act of promulgating an exit strategy may incite protagonists to hasten the exit date or to play a waiting game. External actors can thus become ‘lame ducks’, making little impact on the perceptions of the adversaries who regard the external involvement as a temporary measure to be exploited for gain. This implies a requirement for exit strategies to be replaced with engagement strategies that conceive peacebuilding as a long-term endeavour, constantly reworked and redefined in the light of new challenges.<sup>10</sup>

In addition, an ‘urge to engineer’ on the part of external actors has to be balanced against the need for local ownership of civil–military relations.<sup>11</sup> Unless the external actors develop local stakeholding in security-sector reform, their efforts can become part of the problem in the sense that local factions will hold externally created structures responsible for ills, perhaps the better to drum up support for a return to violence. Local ownership does not necessarily imply, however, that internal developments will take a less transformative direction than the external actors might wish to support. For instance, the overthrow of a regime that uses military and police forces as instruments of oppression can lead to a break with the past. A case in point was the government of Jean-Bertrand Aristide in Haiti, which abolished the armed forces in 1995 (against US wishes), although some personnel were transferred to the new National Police.<sup>12</sup>

### *Local historical and cultural factors*

Finally, the specific historical legacies of civil–military relations are likely to represent a significant challenge to transformation processes. The cultural patterns of the militaries, and the societies from which they spring, are often reinforced through shared historical experiences, especially conflict. The obvious implication of this contextual challenge, that each case merits *sui generis* consideration, does not of course invalidate the search for general principles of reform. It simply suggests that negotiating a balance between external proposals and local stakeholding is bound to be a delicate process.

Since the end of the Cold War, the policies of donor countries have changed to attempt to meet the above challenges, moving away from narrow conceptions of security towards a broader view.

## Military aid in the Cold War

During the Cold War, development and military aid to governments or insurgent groups was conceived by policy-makers as instruments of power politics. Security itself was defined in very narrow terms: it meant maintaining the state and its borders by military means. Thus, to the extent that the security sector was a target for aid it tended to be military aid predominantly aimed at the security forces of client states to provide them with the capacity to resist overthrow by external invasion or internal insurrection. This implied supplying weapons and military training to allies in conflict-torn regions irrespective of the role this assistance might have played in fomenting conflict and undermining democracy and human rights. Indeed, the narrow definition of security used by most states precluded any explicit consideration of the impact that military and police forces had on other security issues, whether economic, social or human. Donors showed little interest in how a security sector could hinder the development of a well-functioning political system (for instance through the use of militias to crack-down on nascent democratic movements). In short, the role of the security sector was not explicitly conceived as a development issue—although it was sometimes argued that the military forces of developing countries could act as important agents of modernisation. Furthermore, Cold War strategic imperatives drove the supply of arms to insurgent groups whose qualification for support rested on their role as the enemies of the enemy rather than on any assessment of their capacity to introduce better governance. For instance, in the 10 years to 1989 the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) channelled \$2 billion in weapons aid through the arms pipeline designed to supply the Afghan factions fighting the Soviet Union.<sup>13</sup>

For many critics in security studies and among NGOs, such military assistance to ‘Third World’ clients seemed to aid and abet repressive and corrupt regimes, thereby constituting the principal threat to the security of their citizens. The bloated military sectors of such regimes were also judged to have a negative impact on overall economic development.<sup>14</sup> From this perspective, the military sector was part of the problem facing developing countries—not part of the solution. Consequently, development theorists and security-studies analysts addressed security-sector issues primarily through general critiques of excessive defence expenditure and the distribution of military aid.

## The ‘security-first’ philosophy

With the end of the Cold War, many governments and their advisors have adopted a wider definition of security, which encompasses, for example economic and human security.<sup>15</sup> At the same time, researchers and practitioners have acknowledged that the security forces are not only part of the problem facing recipients of development aid, but also part of the solution—particularly for societies in conflict, or emerging from it. Proponents of the new ‘aid paradigm’<sup>16</sup> accept that a prerequisite for social development and human-rights protection is the security and stability that comes through an effective, impartial and humane introduction of law and order, alongside the extension of sound governance to the military sector itself. Thus, consensus has grown among policy-makers, researchers and practitioners that the role of the military security sector is a legitimate development issue in its own right, and cannot be addressed just by writing a blank cheque for arms purchases, or by simplistic calls for fewer arms and lower defence spending.

This growing consensus was reflected in, and reinforced by, the ‘Security First’ initiative in Mali. In 1992, the government and Tuareg rebels signed a peace accord. Two years later, a United Nations Advisory Mission to the country concluded that the failure of the security forces to control smuggling and

banditry was preventing both the implementation of the accord, and economic and social development. Some \$200 million of development assistance committed to northern Mali was blocked because of insecurity in the area. The mission proposed a security-first approach, under which aid for development and the demobilisation of former combatants was integrated with assistance to improve policing and border controls.<sup>17</sup>

The Mali experiment has been followed by similar multilateral initiatives, such as the Programme for Co-ordination and Assistance for Security and Co-operation in West Africa (PCASED), administered by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). In addition, individual aid donors have now begun to develop programmes of assistance for security-sector reform. The UK Department for International Development (DFID) has been very much in the lead in this respect (see below), but other countries, such as Canada, the Netherlands and Switzerland, also now have programmes under design.<sup>18</sup>

Multilateral agencies, such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), have also begun to address the security sector in their programmes. The IMF has focused increasingly on defence expenditures during consultations with recipient governments over economic policies, and in administering its lending programmes.<sup>19</sup> For example, in 1999, it suspended a financial rescue package to Zimbabwe because of the spiralling cost of the government's military adventurism in the DRC. The IMF also required reductions in military spending in Sierra Leone after elections in 1996. From the early 1990s, the World Bank began to focus on the problems arising when military expenditure crowded out social and other development spending. This focus was further spurred by legislation requiring the US government to instruct American executive directors of the international financial institutions (IFIs) to take a stricter line on the issue. They were to oppose any aid to countries deemed to lack a functioning system for reporting audited military expenditures to civil authorities, or which declined to provide information about their audit processes. The World Bank has also established a Post-Conflict Unit, which prepares quarterly monitoring reports

on countries and regions affected by conflict. In addition, the Unit manages a \$22m post-conflict fund, providing quick grants for demobilisation, reintegration and community development programmes.<sup>20</sup>

## UK initiatives

In line with the new emphasis on the security sector, both as a development issue and as a legitimate object of development aid, DFID intends to use British aid to address ‘security-sector reform’ in a wide sense. British Secretary of State for International Development, Clare Short, has noted that the security sector is ‘not just the military and the paramilitaries, but the police, border guards and customs services, and the civil structures—in government and in parliament—that are responsible for the management of the security sector’.<sup>21</sup> Civil society is also incorporated in DFID’s initiatives, which include:

- supporting the establishment of structures of proper civilian control over the military;
- training members of the military in international humanitarian law and human rights;
- strengthening national parliamentary oversight of the security apparatus;
- supporting civilian organisations that might act as watchdogs over the security sector; and
- supporting the demobilisation and reintegration of ex-combatants.<sup>22</sup>

Moreover, while there may be significant tension between government departments over the scope and definition of the security sector, DFID is nevertheless actively participating in attempts to forge greater policy coherence between the UK government departments involved in the security sector. DFID’s security-sector reform programme complements the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO)’s Assistance to Support Stability with In-Service Training (ASSIST) programmes, and the Ministry of Defence (MOD)’s defence diplomacy missions.

ASSIST is designed to promote respect for civilian democratic government and practices in overseas military and police forces. Defence diplomacy is intended to 'assist in the development of democratically accountable armed forces, thereby making a significant contribution to conflict prevention and resolution'.<sup>23</sup>

As a mark of this increased co-operation among departments, the government has created two 'conflict-prevention pools'. The first, chaired by the FCO, is the Global Conflict Prevention Initiative (Global Pool) which has a budget of £68m for 2001–02. The second, chaired by DFID, is the Africa Conflict Prevention Initiative (Africa Pool) with a budget of some £50m to deal with Sub-Saharan Africa. However, little of this money is new with most of it having been reallocated from other budgets (and Sierra Leone absorbed a significant proportion of the 2001 Africa Pool budget).<sup>24</sup>

The aim of both pools is to achieve better shared analysis, common policies and improved inter-departmental arrangements for the deployment of resources. The Global Pool will focus on four geographical and four functional priority areas: the Balkans, Middle and Near East, Russia and the former Soviet Union, Central and Eastern Europe; UN peacekeeping and peacebuilding; European Union (EU) civilian crisis management; the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE); and small arms.<sup>25</sup>

Perhaps the best example of inter-departmental co-operation (albeit not without its tensions) has been policy on Sierra Leone since the UK's military intervention. The UK armed forces have provided training and equipment for the Sierra Leone army. DFID has provided support for a variety of security-sector-reform initiatives, including the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration programme. The FCO has actively promoted a United Nations (UN) ban on the import of rough diamonds other than those that have been certified by the government of Sierra Leone.

Such a broad view of the security sector and the integrated approach of UK departments has the advantage of locating ideas about reform in a framework which emphasises that security problems are related to issues of governance, as

much as to problems of the military *per se*. However, the security-sector-reform agenda can be criticised for not going far enough to address the challenges outlined earlier. A critique of the current agenda, together with a discussion of the concept of security-sector transformation, which we posit as more likely to deal with these challenges, are the subject of the next chapter.

# Chapter 2

## A critique of security-sector reform

As already noted, the shortfalls in security-sector governance in countries targeted for action are substantial, and nothing short of a transformation, as opposed to reform, in the relationship between civil authorities, civil society and the security sector is required.

Second, even when broadly conceived, a focus on the security sector risks overlooking the crucial role that other factors, such as the environment or the economy, play in the development and resolution of conflict. It risks over-emphasising the security sector as a target for funds and an agent of change, and increases the likelihood that security-sector reform will become insulated from the wider political economy. In militarised societies, such as Sierra Leone and Kosovo, for example, local military leaders may be involved in international crime, or have access to economic assets that can be traded on the global market. The profits they make from these activities can facilitate the perpetuation of conflict. In Indonesia, senior officers may be making so much from their trading activities that, for instance, improvements in the pay and conditions of the military are unlikely to provide much of an incentive to cease these operations.<sup>26</sup> Similarly, they are likely to resist attempts to institute effective governance procedures that hinder such trading activities. Thus, the problems of insecurity that arise in weak states need to be dealt with holistically rather than in a fragmentary fashion.

Third, there is a risk that security-sector reform will be dominated by actors who are concerned about promoting a 'traditional' approach more akin to the client relationships of the Cold War. A case in point is the \$10m pledged by the US Department of Defense in 2000 to re-professionalise the Nigerian army. The pro-

gramme, run by the private security company Military Professional Resources Incorporated (MPRI), includes initiatives appropriate to the broader conception of reform, such as developing a civilian oversight structure. But it also has the stamp of an old-fashioned military aid package in its provision of military equipment. At the extreme, a concern with the importance of security as a precondition for development (and thus the need for reform of the security forces to achieve this) can offer an opportunity for those who wish to reintroduce Cold War conceptions of the broader modernising potential of the armed forces.<sup>27</sup> This approach needs to be guarded against, as focusing exclusively on the role of military forces as agents of, but not targets for, modernisation risks elevating them to precisely the kind of pre-eminent social and political role that security-sector reform aims to prevent.

Similarly, the language of security-sector reform can also be used to justify policies that have hampered such reform in the past. For instance, both Clare Short and Dr Lewis Moonie (of the MOD) addressed the topic of arms exports in speeches to a DFID conference on the management of military expenditure in February 2000. The difference in emphasis was notable. Short considered that it was ‘important that reformers in developing countries are not undermined by those who wish to sell them arms that are either inappropriate for their needs or beyond their capacity to afford’.<sup>28</sup> By contrast, Moonie argued that,

*we should offer assistance to all nations who seek to identify [their] security needs and reform their security sector and military expenditure to meet them. Defence exports need to be seen in this context. Developing nations, as much as anyone, need equipment to ensure security against internal as well as external threats.*<sup>29</sup>

Thus, whereas Short underlined the negative consequences of excessive arms expenditure Moonie deployed a traditional justification of arms sales—as the right to self defence—but in the language of security-sector reform. An emphasis

on transformation would make it less likely that reform will be captured by proponents of the status quo.

Fourth, in promoting reform within the security sectors of aid recipients, the inter-relationships between local, regional and global actors are often overlooked. The focus has been on deficiencies in weak states, rather than on how the policies and practices of external actors contribute to these deficiencies. Security-sector reform underplays the need for transformation in both developed and developing states. For instance, in South Africa the UK has sponsored a workshop on light weapons, funded by the African Civil–Military Relations (ACMR) project run by the Institute for Security Studies, Pretoria, with a UK MOD team to help develop a new defence force. At the same time, however, the UK has also lobbied South Africa intensively to buy British defence goods as part of a large multinational arms deal (including submarines, corvettes, light fighters, jet aircraft trainers, helicopters and main battle tanks) signed by South Africa in 1999. The whole package escalated in price from R30bn to R44bn by late 2000 and became mired in accusations of corruption, undue favouritism towards British Aerospace and over-pricing by suppliers.<sup>30</sup> Notwithstanding the UK's adoption of new arms-export guidelines, its policies in this area seem to have become complicit in a process which appears to have undermined the integrity of the South African security sector.

None of this is to suggest that security-sector reform should be rejected. When set against earlier Cold War approaches to military aid, it represents a significant evolution, and the fact that it may have weaknesses in both conception and implementation should not detract from its many strengths. However, the goals of security-sector reform would be better achieved through a broader process of security-sector transformation. Not only would this recognise the fundamental changes relevant to security sectors in post-conflict states but would also engage more explicitly with the wider political economy of violence and insecurity. It would further acknowledge that both aid 'benefactors' and 'supplicants' may need to revise their policies.

## Towards a transformative security-sector approach

As noted earlier, the security-sector-reform agenda, delineated by both academics and policy-makers, has tended to focus on reform of the security sectors of developing and weak states.<sup>31</sup> At its most extensive, the agenda has stretched to encompass the reform of regional institutions with the occasional nod towards restraining arms sales by major exporters. Conflict-prone societies are the chief referents. In some ways such an approach can be quite radical. It can be a strategy designed to protect, empower and enlarge what Mary Kaldor terms the ‘islands of civility’—those sections of society committed to peace rather than war.<sup>32</sup> As an approach to bolstering sustainable peace it can be incorporated into a transformative approach—albeit with two qualifications.

First, contemporary war cannot be characterised by a simple dichotomy between the ‘islands of civility’, often represented as civil society, and an ‘uncivil society’ comprising warlords, mafia groups and dictators. Indeed, one of the striking features of contemporary conflicts is the extent to which large sections of society are co-opted into violence and criminality, if only because soldiering and trading in illicit goods offer the principal and best rewarded employment. Thus, as used here, empowering the ‘islands of civility’ does not just refer to the idea of empowering discrete groups already committed to peace, but also to creating the conditions under which others would be afforded the opportunity to participate in a transformative process.

Second, there is an important distinction to be made between the goal of empowering the ‘islands of civility’ and the concern to promote what external actors hold to be universal values. The latter, when taken to extremes, can undermine the former by substituting the promotion of local decision-making with the imposition from above of externally approved models of rights, governance and economics. It can also prove counter-productive by creating or adding to local perceptions of an externally imposed, and, therefore, illegitimate peace, against which the agents of ‘incivility’ can more easily mobilise a broader spectrum of opposition. A transformative approach would aim to limit the urge of

external actors to engineer the situation in order to further the empowerment of domestic societies.<sup>33</sup>

But a transformative approach to the security sector also encompasses a global perspective in which war-torn societies are not the only referents. Transformation entails a multilevel and multifunctional strategy that addresses not just the domestic environment of the state but gives equal weight to change at the regional or global level. This may seem an obvious point, but the role that global structures play in precipitating and perpetuating conflict is not always adequately recognised. As Comfort Ero remarks, for instance, an early document produced by the UK's Africa conflict-prevention pool, *The Causes of Conflict in Africa*, is notable for:

*failing to acknowledge the highly globalised nature of war in Africa . . . [it] reflects a fundamental problem inherent in Western thinking: consistently to see and define the continent as disconnected from the rest of the world and in a permanent state of crisis or, worse still, chaos.*<sup>34</sup>

Furthermore, a transformative approach to the security-sector is grounded in recognition of the profound way that the sector shapes, and is shaped by, factors outside the sector itself, for example, economic structures and actors at domestic, regional and global levels. It thus goes further than a holistic and broad interpretation of security issues within war-torn societies, requiring also complementary policies that are external to those societies at regional and global levels. The alternative is to risk a bifurcation of policy into discrete areas that are unconnected or even contradictory. For instance, the stringent fiscal policies of the IFIs have been held responsible for hindering development in El Salvador of the new National Civilian Police and the land-transfer programme, both of which were essential elements of the UN's peacebuilding strategy.<sup>35</sup>

Security-sector transformation, then, is not an approach that treats the security-sector actors and institutions of developing states/regions as the exclu-

sive objects of reform. Rather, it encompasses the structures and agents (whether they be domestic, regional or global) that condition the security sector of the state, and seeks ways to empower 'islands of civility' to make their own accommodations with the propensity to violence.

This assumes a range of initiatives from the local to the global, addressing not just security-sector dynamics per se but other dynamics that, nevertheless, impinge on the sector. For ease of analysis selected initiatives are divided here into two categories. First, what we term 'structural arms control' initiatives are aimed primarily at transforming global or regional structures in ways that strengthen 'islands of civility' and lessen the attractions of organised violence in pre- and post-conflict states. For example, curbing inappropriate arms expenditures or the illicit income generation that sustains military rebellion does not merely suggest reform in war-torn societies but also changes in the practices of external institutions that condition the dynamics of conflict and peacebuilding in such countries. The second category comprises initiatives that aim to promote socio-political safeguards against militarism within post-conflict states with the aim, again, of empowering and extending local stakeholding in non-violent politics.

# Chapter 3

## Structural arms control inducements

The concept of ‘structural arms control’ has been used by Stephanie Neuman to describe how changes in economic or political structures restrict defence spending.<sup>36</sup> Similarly, the term ‘structural disarmament’ is sometimes used to describe how the rising cost of defence equipment has forced reductions in the absolute number of weapon systems acquired by armed forces.

Structural arms control, as used by Neuman, is a passive concept, in which decisions about the allocation of resources to defence are influenced by the operation of the international system. However, interventionist strategies could be adopted to modify the external structures and policies that condition the balance of economic incentives and disincentives for engaging in organised violence in conflict-prone societies. In effect, the goal would be to modify external policies so as to facilitate internal sustainable peace. For instance, initiatives may be undertaken with a view to influencing the general conditions of the global arms market or to address the worldwide trade in goods, such as conflict diamonds. On the issue of weapons’ proliferation, for example, the British government has signed international agreements against the use of bribery to secure contracts, and has announced a commitment not to provide export credits for defence sales to 63 low-income developing countries. DFID has also provided political and financial support for regional initiatives to address the proliferation of light weapons.<sup>37</sup>

The purpose of this section is to outline and evaluate current initiatives that can be placed under the rubric of structural arms control, and to suggest ways in which they might be further promoted either through UK domestic policy or through initiatives at a multilateral level.

## *Export credits*

Export credits are a key mechanism for facilitating arms exports. In the UK, the Export Credits Guarantee Department (ECGD) provides insurance cover to compensate exporters when buyers default. It also gives unconditional guarantees to British banks covering exports, allowing banks to make loans and charge interest at levels below normal market rates. The defence trade accounted for an average of 27% of ECGD business in the five years from 1994–95 to 1998–99. In contrast, defence sales account for just 2% of UK exports. According to the calculations of the Oxford Research Group, the ECGD's annual net subsidy for defence exports amounts to £227m.<sup>38</sup>

In September 1997, Chancellor Gordon Brown committed the UK to denying export credits for non-productive expenditure, which includes defence equipment, to all highly-indebted poor countries (HIPC). This has been extended to cover a further 22 countries only eligible for highly concessional International Development Association (IDA) loans from the World Bank. The government is also pressing for an agreement among the OECD countries that would limit export credits for non-productive expenditure. While these may be transformative in their effect, their practical impact should not be overestimated. Many HIPC and IDA countries are likely to have poor credit ratings anyway, thus reducing their chances of receiving such credit. Between 1990 and 1997, the UK extended export credits for defence-related business to just three HIPC, accounting for only 0.15% of all export credits,<sup>39</sup> and no defence export credits were extended to IDAs in the five years to 2000.<sup>40</sup> By contrast, of the top five countries in 2000 that defaulted on payments for defence contracts but which the UK government guaranteed—Jordan (£253m), Indonesia (£131m), Algeria (£98m), Egypt (£46m) and Kenya (£16m)—only Kenya is denied export credits under the existing policy.

Moreover, government statements have noted that this initiative does not preclude export credits for defence or dual-use equipment deemed essential for national security, or when improved security can be shown to have a positive

impact on development.<sup>41</sup> Previous experience—for instance on the application of the UK's restrictions on defence sales to Iraq in the 1980s—suggests such careful phrasing may provide loopholes which could be exploited to undermine the integrity of the initiative.

One correction would be to provide more detailed definitions of the criteria governing exceptions to the general policy of withholding export credits. Where credits are furnished for security-related exports to countries covered by the initiative, this could be recorded in the government's *Annual Report on Strategic Exports*, and the reasons given. Another option would be to increase the number of states covered by the prohibition on export credits to include all states that receive development aid and those that have recently defaulted on payments for defence contracts.

### *Taxing defence sales to fund disarmament and demobilisation*

Commentators and institutions, including the UNDP, have called for a global tax on defence sales.<sup>42</sup> A range of rates has been proposed, from 5–50%.<sup>43</sup> Even at relatively low levels, the returns would be substantial. Allowing for the administrative costs of collection, a 7% tax would generate an estimated annual revenue of \$1.3bn.<sup>44</sup> This is equivalent to the UN's peacekeeping budget for 1999. Moreover, the increased cost of weapons resulting from the tax would also reduce the volume of the global arms trade.

Of course, the idea of taxing defence sales has been around for some time without yet being taken up.<sup>45</sup> While this does not necessarily undermine either the intrinsic merit of the idea or its value as a long-term goal, it does point to consideration of similar but less ambitious policies that are perhaps more likely to be realised in the short term. For instance, the UK could unilaterally operate a modified version of this proposal. The MOD places an export levy on the sale of arms that have been developed with government funds. Although this is often waived or reduced, it still brings in roughly £50m a year.<sup>46</sup> One option, therefore,

would be to raise the export levy, consistently apply it, and use the income generated to fund either activities undertaken by the two conflict-prevention pools or a rigorous end-use inspection regime. Thus, whatever the merits of its various arms deals, the UK could show that receipts from them were helping to service the needs of conflict prevention or non-proliferation.

Furthermore, defence companies currently have little incentive to observe embargoes rigorously, and every incentive to breach them. The chances of detection are small and, given the close relationship between governments and defence companies, breaches of formal policy are often overlooked. An alternative approach might be to work for an international agreement allowing the victims of illegitimate arms supplies to sue for compensation. Where companies or states have knowingly broken a UN arms embargo, the government or citizens of the state to which arms have been supplied would be able to sue the firm or state responsible, and to claim reparations. These could be put towards the costs of demilitarisation and peacebuilding.

It can be argued that this is unrealistic given that weapons often change hands a number of times before ending up in a particular conflict. However, as recent UN reports on the breaching of sanctions on Angola and Sierra Leone have shown, it is feasible to track the complex arrangements by which arms are illegally shipped from place to place.<sup>47</sup> Tagging arms and improving end-use monitoring would also make it easier to track the flow of weapons. Moreover, other sectors of industry are fined for failing to implement government policy, even where they are not directly at fault. In the UK, for instance, ferry companies, airlines and road hauliers face fines of £2,000 for every illegal immigrant they bring into the country, even if they do so unwittingly.<sup>48</sup> Consider the treatment of the Luton-based company, Air Foyle, which was involved in shipping arms to rebels in Sierra Leone in breach of the UN embargo. In March 1999, the company flew 68 tons of weapons, including 3,000 Kalashnikov assault rifles, from Ukraine to Burkina Faso, from where they were transported on to Sierra Leone. The company denied any knowledge of their final destination. When asked about Air

Foyle's activities, FCO minister Peter Hain asserted that 'any Briton or any British company, any British group which is involved or could be involved in open breach of UN sanctions, will have us coming down on them like a ton of bricks'.<sup>49</sup> Yet no action was taken against the company, and nearly a year after the government had been informed of Air Foyle's activities in Burkina Faso the firm was used to deliver Royal Air Force helicopters to South Africa.<sup>50</sup>

### *Tightening interpretations of defence export rules*

Both the EU code and UK export criteria include commitments not to export defence equipment where this would affect the recipient's economy. The British government has interpreted this in a way that only allows consideration of the impact of each individual export licence, as opposed to the cumulative impact of arms sales. As the report of the joint Parliamentary Committees on UK arms-sales policy has noted: 'except in rare cases of a single licence application—such as for a number of aircraft—which on its own could skew an economy, this seems to imply that the criteria are a dead letter'.<sup>51</sup> No licence has yet been refused on the grounds of the effect on the economic development of the recipient country.<sup>52</sup> This has led to anomalies in policy. DFID, for instance, has cut long-term development aid to Ethiopia because of its spending on arms as a consequence of the war with Eritrea, to which the UK had previously allowed defence exports. Although DFID objected, the economic impact of individual sales to Eritrea was not deemed sufficient to breach the criteria as currently interpreted.<sup>53</sup> One course of action, then, would be to tighten up interpretation of both the UK and EU codes so that the cumulative impact of defence sales could be taken into account.

### *Imposing embargoes on irresponsible arms exporters*

Multilateral export control arrangements predominantly focus on banning the transfer of arms to designated pariah regimes or to unstable regions. This

requires exporters to exercise a remarkable degree of self-restraint and abjure financially rewarding deals in a context where the only downside is the possibility of rhetorical condemnation from the 'international community'. Greater consideration could be given to embargoes on the purchase of arms from producer countries that consistently violate multilateral restraints on arms transfers. Indeed, the United Nations Panel of Experts on Sierra Leone has recommended such an initiative in its report.<sup>54</sup> The effect of this approach would be to impose defence industrial costs on serial sanctions busters, making the economics of ethical behaviour more attractive than it is at present.

This could be coupled with greater funding to help potential problem states improve security at weapon depots, fund demobilisation and industry conversion programmes and improve their capacity to patrol national borders. This is of particular relevance to the states of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union (FSU), many of which are sources of sanctions-busting arms. Initiatives already exist. For example, under the Stability Pact for south-east Europe, the US, Norway and Germany agreed in September 2000 to support the destruction of some 130,000 small arms and light weapons collected from civilians in Albania, along with surplus military stocks of small arms. Indeed, the EU, OSCE and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) all now have programmes to address the regional problem of small arms.<sup>55</sup> There is, however, a risk of duplication of political effort and scarce resources as well as lack of co-ordination. Moreover, many of these initiatives are either under-funded, largely symbolic, or have not been widely taken up. For instance, while a NATO/Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) programme on small arms was announced in July 1999 and a Partnership Work Programme (PWP) Chapter agreed in February 2000, as of August 2000 only Lithuania and Romania had indicated that they would take up NATO's offer of assistance.<sup>56</sup>

Similarly, the Stability Pact for south-eastern Europe has now produced proposals to combat small-arms proliferation which envisage the creation of a Set-Aside Fund amounting to \$2m for the first year of its operation.<sup>57</sup> This may seem

to represent an ambitious target until contrasted with the cost of compensation to gun owners in recent firearms collection programmes. In Australia and the UK, for instance, the cost amounted to some US\$163m and £90.2m respectively. Even in less developed countries the cost of disarmament or gun buy-back programmes is substantial. For instance, the UNDP's weapons-for-development programme in Gramsh (a district of about 100 villages in central Albania) cost \$2m over a two-year period, while a buy-back and confiscation programme undertaken in Nicaragua between 1991–93 cost some \$6m.<sup>58</sup>

The multiplicity of institutions now engaging with the issue of conventional-weapons proliferation could do so in a way that complements rather than duplicates the work being carried out. Alternatively, a single overarching programme could be developed to bring coherence to efforts to combat the proliferation of conventional arms. A model here might be the US Co-operative Threat Reduction Program, which provides aid to the nuclear successor states of the FSU to comply with their nuclear arms-control requirements and to employ former nuclear scientists. A similar programme designed to address the problem of conventional proliferation could work either at a global level to provide guidance and funding for sub-regional efforts or, alternatively, it could operate throughout Europe and the FSU to provide coherence to pan-European programmes. It would also provide a high-profile institutional focus able to attract the substantially higher levels of funding needed to institute effective programmes to tackle conventional-weapons proliferation.

If the curbs outlined in this section were pursued, the effect would be to re-orientate the balance of incentives for recidivist 'sanctions busting' in a way that would reward the ethical and impose costs on unethical behaviour—costs that do not currently exist.

### *Aid conditionality*

A number of governments have undertaken to make aid conditional on low levels of defence expenditure. However, applying automatic conditionalities may

not be effective.<sup>59</sup> To ensure reductions in inappropriate military spending, local political commitment is needed. As Nicole Ball notes, cuts imposed from outside may simply encourage local authorities to hide military expenditure in other budget headings.<sup>60</sup> Nevertheless, external actors have to decide what exactly constitutes excessive military expenditure, so that this can inform negotiations with local actors, and domestic policy on, for example, whether to permit arms sales to a country or region. Attempts to do this, in the UK and elsewhere, have been hampered by difficulties in establishing what constitutes a reasonable level of defence expenditure, and the criteria to be used in making this assessment. For instance, simply using the percentage of gross domestic product devoted to defence can be criticised on the grounds that this represents a very crude measure of militarisation, and ignores factors such as the proportion of the population in the armed forces. Policy here would be aided by the development of a more sophisticated index of militarisation. Like the UNDP's *Human Development Index*, this would use a mathematical formula to synthesise a variety of data on the defence commitments of states so as to rank them according to their degree of militarisation.

Clearly, levels of military spending should ultimately be based on a comprehensive assessment of the security environment. Donors need to recognise that countries have genuine security threats rather than focusing narrowly on levels of military spending in the abstract when determining whether a country is spending too much or too little. Indeed, there may be good reasons for some items of defence expenditure to rise. Increasing the pay of military and police forces, for example, can be justified on the grounds that it reduces the incentive for corruption. Similarly, the need to release resources for economic development has to be balanced against the demands of external defence and internal security. Nevertheless, indices of militarisation can provide an important guide for policy-makers, both in the UK and in war-torn societies. They might, for instance, be used to trigger a more thorough consideration of the merits of arms transfers or military aid programmes to particular regimes. The publica-

tion of such indices would also provide a more sophisticated and standardised set of criteria, which could trigger investigations of government policy by parliaments or researchers.

### *Curbing the provision of arms as military aid to governments in conflict zones*

This issue is of particular relevance to the UK given its experience in Sierra Leone. In October 1999, the British government announced that it would supply the country with: 132 light machine guns with two million rounds of ammunition; 7,500 rifles; 800,000 rounds of training ammunition; and 24 81-mm mortars, with 2,000 rounds. In May 2000, 10,000 self-loading rifles were provided. In June, the government added five million rounds of ammunition and 4,000 mortars and, in July, another shipment of five million rounds was announced.<sup>61</sup> The UK is the largest arms supplier to the Sierra Leonean government.

This illustrates a legitimacy problem in responding to contemporary conflicts. On the one hand, it can be argued that the Revolutionary United Front (RUF)'s failure to abide by the peace agreement and its terror campaign against civilians necessitated the UK's supplying arms so as to shore up a legitimate government. During the war in Bosnia–Herzegovina, imposing an arms embargo against all parties to the conflict was criticised because it gave the better-equipped Serbs, who were widely viewed as the aggressors, a military advantage. At the same time, however, there is a long history of small-arms supplies to one party either being diverted to regional neighbours or ending up in the hands of enemies and thus fuelling wars. This concern underlies the moratorium on the export, import and manufacture of small arms agreed by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in 1998. The UK has provided £300,000 to the UNDP administered PCASED, which is aimed at implementing the moratorium.<sup>62</sup>

Whilst short-term necessity may appear to demand the provision of military aid to a weak but legitimate state, prevailing conditions are likely to lead to leakage, often on a large scale. In Sierra Leone, UK-supplied arms have already 'leaked'

to the West Side Boys, a faction with a reputation for human-rights abuse. The West Side Boys were initially part of the pro-government forces, and some members were reportedly accepted for training by the British as part of a new Sierra Leone army.<sup>63</sup> In September 2000, though, they abducted a number of UK troops. Furthermore, the Sierra Leonean army itself has a dire human-rights record and its commitment to supporting the current government of President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah is questionable.<sup>64</sup>

In the long term, these supplies simply increase the quantity of arms in circulation once a conflict has ceased. The threats facing such states may need to be addressed in other ways, such as providing robust multinational forces. 'Security-first' policies should not be pursued in a manner that simply leads to insecurity later.

### *Controlling 'conflict goods'*

Trade in non-military goods ('conflict goods') is important in sustaining conflicts. This has been given particular prominence by the debate over conflict diamonds, the sale of which has funded arms acquisitions by parties to the conflicts in, for example, Sierra Leone and Angola. However, the role of conflict goods is both broader, and more complex.

- In Colombia, British Petroleum pays the government a 'war tax' of \$1.25 a barrel, and has reportedly signed an agreement to provide an additional £39m to establish a new military squad. Meanwhile, guerrillas fighting the government levy taxes on the production of cocaine.
- During the conflict in Liberia, warlord Charles Taylor plundered the country to fund his military campaign, exporting timber, diamonds and rubber.<sup>65</sup>
- Despite a UN embargo on the supply of petroleum products to the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) rebels, the group acquired 2.3m litres of fuel for its administration and military activities between January 1996 and December 1998.<sup>66</sup>

- Post-conflict Bosnia has become a major centre for the smuggling of illegal migrants into Europe. The International Organisation for Migration estimates that the trade, which is protected by corrupt local officials, is worth £70m a year to Bosnia's economy.<sup>67</sup>

Both conflict prevention and post-conflict peacebuilding may be better served by targeting the war economies of military factions, with a view to raising the economic costs of conflict. The British government has been in the forefront of efforts to address this issue, particularly with respect to the problem of conflict diamonds. For example, it has campaigned for sanctions on diamond exports from Liberia because of Liberia's role as a conduit for RUF diamonds. It has also been a prominent supporter of the Kimberley Process—a grouping comprising key countries in the diamond trade, industry representatives and NGOs—which since 2000 has been developing proposals for a global certification scheme to prevent the trade in conflict diamonds.

However, international action on conflict goods has tended to address trade by guerrilla forces, with the exception of Charles Taylor's Liberia, and has largely avoided meaningful sanctions against governments. For instance, the December 2000 United Nations General Assembly resolution on conflict diamonds defines them as: 'rough diamonds which are used by *rebel movements* [emphasis added] to finance their military activities, including attempts to undermine or overthrow legitimate governments'.<sup>68</sup>

Similarly, UN sanctions on conflict diamonds from Angola and Sierra Leone exempt the governments of these countries, which both have records of human-rights abuse and corruption, and which have also mortgaged the natural resources of their countries to prosecute conflict. Likewise, the government of the DRC (and neighbouring states that exploit its resources) has not suffered sanctions on its conflict trade despite the recommendations of a UN experts panel.<sup>69</sup> Thus, current international action is not actually designed to guarantee that diamonds or any other products are 'blood free', merely that they do not have

the blood of government supporters on them. For instance, diamond exports from the DRC and Angola accounted for 17% (\$899m) of the value of diamonds imported into Belgium between January and August 2000.<sup>70</sup> Similarly, the World Bank has praised Uganda for its economic performance (despite the fact this was based in part on the exploitation of resources in the DRC), and effectively rewarded both countries for their resource predation by proposing them as candidates for the HIPC debt-relief initiative.<sup>71</sup>

In sum, policy on conflict goods appears to be being skewed towards penalising rebel groups and in extreme cases pariah states like Liberia. Not only does this implicitly legitimise the trade in conflict goods undertaken by many actors but it also leaves a loophole that rebels can exploit. For instance, one route for the export of UNITA diamonds is via the Congo where dealers mix them with local diamonds from the DRC, which is then declared as their country of provenance.<sup>72</sup>

Furthermore, current action on conflict diamonds only focuses on the trade in rough diamonds, as does a proposed global diamond certification scheme if and when it is agreed. However, UNITA reputedly has factories in the United Arab Emirates to polish its diamonds and also has long-standing relationships with diamond cutters, while the government of the DRC is planning a joint venture diamond-cutting factory with a Belgian-based company. At the very least this raises question marks over the potential efficacy of any global certification scheme eventually agreed.

Attention to the political economy of conflict goods certainly raises difficult ethical and strategic questions. For example, to what extent should the economic motivations of warlords be recognised by offering them a lucrative stake in the post-conflict economy as a 'reward' for their commitment to a peace process? Despite a history of atrocious human-rights abuses by the RUF in Sierra Leone, the peace accord of 1999 allocated responsibility for the country's diamond trade to the RUF leader, Foday Sankoh, a position he used for continued arms acquisitions.<sup>73</sup> Nevertheless, there are clearly situations where a combination of pragmatism and careful judgement regarding the commitment of parties to a peace

process may justify settlements that accommodate their economic interests. As the case of Sankoh and the RUF illustrates, though, peace agreements may need to place more emphasis on transparency, not only in governance but also in the operation of key industrial sectors. Indeed, even in ‘post-Sankoh’ Sierra Leone, decisions to grant large diamond and oil concessions to foreign companies have been taken behind closed doors.<sup>74</sup>

In particular, the emphasis in the sphere of security-sector reform on improving the capacity of government and civil society to oversee the security forces should be extended to include capacity-building support for civil-society watchdog groups in monitoring the use of principal trading assets. There may also be a role for the IFIs to encourage civil use of the profits from key assets. For instance, the World Bank has established international regulation of Chad’s oil income so that it may not be used for military expenditure.<sup>75</sup> Such approaches, however, have to balance carefully the urge to engineer from above against the importance of empowering local actors to make their own assessments of the security needs of a state. As with defence expenditure, externally imposed restrictions that are not buttressed by wider social support and appropriate domestic oversight structures will be lacking in both legitimacy and effectiveness.

Preventing the trade in conflict goods from undermining security-sector transformation will probably require a focal point within the UN to monitor the dynamics of such trade. It will also require the UK and other governments to plug loopholes and consistently apply restrictions on the conflict trade of all actors, and not just that of particular pariahs. Additionally, the UK government might consider establishing an annual audit of companies, to detect whether they have a role in supporting war economies, and detail any steps they have taken to guard against involvement in conflict trade. If this was given the same weight as the *Annual Report on Strategic Arms Exports*, and led to the same level of scrutiny by the press and parliament, it could provide an important vehicle for debate on the role and control of conflict goods and on the limits that should be imposed on Western businesses that facilitate and profit from conflict trade.

## *Transforming diasporas*

Remittances from diasporas are important in sustaining war economies. The Albanian diaspora, for instance, provided volunteers for the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), and financed resistance to Serb rule in Kosovo. Indeed, the head of the KLA's Homeland Calling Fund in Germany claimed that at the height of the insurgency he could raise DM3m a month for Kosovo, while in the US donations were claimed to be bringing in \$10–15,000 a month.<sup>76</sup> Members of the diaspora also arranged supplies to Kosovo: in the US they shipped boots, uniforms, satellite telephones and armour-piercing rifles.<sup>77</sup> However, diasporas can also support the reconstitution of a society after conflict. In 'post-war' Kosovo, for instance, remittances have been a vital economic lifeline for returning refugees and in El Salvador the World Bank estimated that remittances from abroad amounted to over \$1.3bn in 1996.<sup>78</sup>

It is important to develop mechanisms by which diasporas are actively engaged, not only during the search for a peace agreement, but also in post-conflict peacebuilding. Such mechanisms could involve including diaspora representatives in peace negotiations, or integrating the funds provided by overseas groups into post-conflict regeneration. This is not to deny that members of a diaspora can often be more radical than their local counterparts, who might have experienced war first-hand. However, drawing them into the process of peacebuilding has the potential to turn them from supporters of conflict into peacemakers. There is, though, a paucity of research on the role of diasporas particularly in conflicts.<sup>79</sup> The UK government might, therefore, consider funding such research examining the influence of diasporas on conflict and the mechanisms by which they might be drawn into conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

## The role of the international financial institutions

The IFIs have shown some awareness of the need to fund demobilisation programmes, so that former fighters have a means of income and employment. For example, in 1989 the World Bank called for increased social spending in Mozam-

bique to underpin the demobilisation process.<sup>80</sup> The UK government can promote the targeting of demobilisation aid in this way, and also encourage the IMF not to insist on macroeconomic stabilisation at the expense of the economic integration of former combatants. The IFIs may need to consider how far to go in pursuing neo-liberal economics in conditions that will actually make the acquisition of weaponry or the resort to lawlessness and violence more attractive. One of the immediate causes of the 1997 coup in Sierra Leone, for example, was an IMF-imposed reduction in a rice subsidy that benefited the military.<sup>81</sup>

In devastated economies, prescriptions based on neo-liberal economic programmes underestimate the extent to which privatisation and the testing of public goods and services against market criteria, as in Bosnia–Herzegovina, for example, can foster divisions in society and strengthen local rentiers and warlords.<sup>82</sup> Smuggling, moonlighting and other illegal activities are usually portrayed as deviations from an ideal standard of market behaviour because they are beyond the control of the IFIs. But they clearly perform a service in a welfare vacuum, including providing means of escape, sustenance, employment and the prospect of enrichment. In Colombia the guerrilla/mafia economy takes a sophisticated form of parallel governance based on consent as well as fear. One reading of this predicament is that the IFIs have not done enough to revise their macroeconomic policies to take into account issues such as social justice and criminality.<sup>83</sup> Indeed, the political economies of war-torn societies are unlikely to provide long-term security without the equivalent of statist provisions for employment, welfare and public services that will emancipate the populations from clientism and mafia welfare.

Safeguarding the welfare of the population in general is as important for security-sector transformation as the provision of alternative sources of employment for demobilised militias and military personnel. Neo-liberal economic modelling undermines security when it provides opportunities for violent groups to continue controlling social relations. In this respect, avoiding the lethal mixture of social unrest and violent criminality suggests a requirement for

policy revision on the part of the IFIs and their donors. The resort to conditionality for disbursement of aid and reconstruction funds does not work by itself, because aid has limited influence in the dynamics of local political struggles.<sup>84</sup> Logically, therefore, dominant neo-liberal policies of reconstruction might be revisited to incorporate measures to sustain the most vulnerable parts of the population within the legitimate sectors of the economy.

# Chapter 4

## Socio-political safeguards against militarism

The second element of a transformative security strategy involves developing socio-political safeguards intended to protect or foster local capacities to meet a society's various security needs. After a conflict, the strength of militaries and militias relative to civilian groups affects the degree of control civilians have on the rehabilitation and reform of the security sector.<sup>85</sup> External actors are often placed in the difficult position of having to collaborate with gunmen in order to achieve demilitarisation. Moreover, in internal conflicts a central government's control of force is weak. Regular militaries confront paramilitary and guerrilla forces that are often ill-disciplined, and motivated by greed as much as politics.<sup>86</sup> It is appropriate, therefore, to speak of problems arising from civil–militia relations; indeed, in modern conflicts, militias often exert control over populations by formulating and manipulating group identity.<sup>87</sup>

Where militia groups are disciplined and organise a parallel economy that includes a welfare system, such as the Sudanese People's Liberation Army or the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, external actors need to create a viable substitute in the formal economy. Alternatively, they can engage the militias in negotiations that give priority to issues of humanitarian relief and social justice to safeguard the populations that they claim to be protecting from injustice. Where militias are parasitic and rapacious but depend on the goodwill of civilians to produce taxes for conducting warfare, it may be possible for external actors to wean civilians away from their control by appealing to human-rights principles and providing economic benefits.

Where regular armies maintain some semblance of control, as in Sierra Leone, it may be possible to appeal to the concepts of legitimacy and 'profession-

alism', which according to Samuel Huntington should keep the military out of politics.<sup>88</sup> However, 'professionalism' is not a guaranteed route to the demilitarisation of societies. It can be interpreted as loyalty to some higher authority, such as 'the nation', rather than to a particular government; in many conflict-prone states, nationalism and the need for strong central government have provided gilt-edged invitations for the military to intervene.<sup>89</sup> Moreover, as Alice Hills has noted with respect to policing, standards of professionalism are culturally dependent and often skill- and status-based, rather than linked to moral choices. This can mitigate the impact of external moderating influences on organisation and behaviour.<sup>90</sup> Finally, transformation is unlikely to be achieved by merely professionalising the agencies of law and order. Civilian control may be exercised for narrow personal or party interests and the suppression of political opposition. In Croatia under President Franjo Tudjman, for instance, army staff and the officer class were expected to be members of Tudjman's Croat Democratic Union or face dismissal.<sup>91</sup>

In countries where élite political institutions are discredited but civil-society groups are well supported, the potential for political resistance to military rule and the temptation for the military to supplant civil authorities may both be present.<sup>92</sup> Agitation by civil society may be a spur for the military to check civilian rule. A culture of transformative civil–military relations thus requires credible and respected political institutions, including political parties that do not rely on coercion. In turn, institutionalised civilian supremacy depends on political elements that are usually absent from societies emerging from conflict. These elements are: consensus about where legitimate sovereignty lies; consensus about processes for making policy decisions including procedures for political succession; and a capacity in the civilian sector to defend its rights through legal means.<sup>93</sup>

By themselves, professionalism and civilian control are insufficient to manage security-sector reform. The separation of powers, political pluralism and the engagement of civil society are indispensable conditions for a non-politicised military, and a non-militarised society.

Civil society is a contested concept. The World Bank, for example, identifies it with the market and with capitalist individualism.<sup>94</sup> By contrast, civil society can be construed as an emancipatory political alternative to authoritarianism: ‘where progressive values and political practices can be articulated, counter-hegemonic institutions can be created.’<sup>95</sup> Not all non-state associations are ‘progressive’, of course; some may be dedicated to racism and violence or, like the mafia, may be illegal. It is not the existence of civic associations that strengthens civil society, but their purpose and the extent of their freedom to operate.<sup>96</sup> In the context of security-sector reform, civil groups can be singled out for support if they further bottom-up democratic processes for building trust, co-operation, compromise, inclusion and pluralism. For framing a transformative approach to civil–military relations, it is also important to note a difference of emphasis between: civilian control and management, which is constitutionally established through law and formal decision-making processes; and civil-society engagement, which is largely a matter of political and social mobilisation.

These are not mutually exclusive categories because the engagement of civil society can also be formalised in ways that safeguard rights legally and constitutionally. For example, since Slovenia’s mini-war with the Yugoslav army, tribunals that hear claims for conscientious-objector status have a statutory obligation to include NGO representatives, such as peace activists, on their panels.<sup>97</sup>

### *Civilian control, separation of powers and civilian management capacity*

It is a defining attribute of democratic societies that armed forces—the military, intelligence services, civil guards, customs and police—are under civilian control. Civilian managers claim key powers:

- approving and supervising military budgets and programmes;
- approving and supervising the configuration of forces, and weapons’ acquisition and decommissioning;

- appointing senior military commanders;
- deciding military deployments, and approving terms and rules of engagement; and restricting the political activities of military officers, and setting rules governing their role in public life.

The nature and extent of this control and management varies from state to state. In democracies with conscription and a tradition of the ‘citizen-in-arms’, military forces may have a surprising degree of autonomy.<sup>98</sup> Nevertheless, as a general rule the separation of powers extends to the exclusion or removal of military forces from the judicial system and government departments, sometimes including defence ministries (as specified for El Salvador in the 1992 peace accords, for example).<sup>99</sup> But the gap should not be so wide that the military develops an autonomous political existence. Legitimate channels for the military to pursue its interests, such as lobbying law-makers and bureaucrats, may be conceded, where this is hedged by constitutional procedures and monitored for transparency.

DFID has given notice that the UK regards attention to the civil–military structures of government as important, including training civil servants and political leaders with defence roles. Areas that might be covered include:

- human rights;
- defence and threat analysis;
- conflict resolution;
- budgetary matters;
- stock control and
- procurement probity.<sup>100</sup>

The FCO and MOD have military training assistance programmes in law and civilian control. In South Africa, a British Military Training Team (BMATT) has supported the creation of the South African National Defence Force in place of the apartheid-era military system. Other examples include assistance from the US and EU countries for police reform in Albania, Palestine, Latin America and

Africa. Several studies suggest that policing assistance is generally under-funded, and that more needs to be done.<sup>101</sup> Other funds have been provided to reform judicial/legal systems, including court and prison reforms and anti-corruption agencies.

### *Regulating security-sector assistance in a domestic crisis*

A key dimension of security-sector transformation will be to regulate the terms and conditions under which enforcement authorities, such as the police and the military, are able to provide assistance to civilian bodies in the event of non-political emergencies, such as natural disasters, or in politically inspired civil unrest. Establishing strict constitutional criteria for this assistance could make a contribution to the restructuring of the security sector, as long as the use of the enforcement agencies are closely regulated to inhibit their potential to develop autonomous political roles, especially in dealing with industrial and political unrest. This applies particularly to military establishments that are likely to have the equipment or manpower to participate effectively but also the armed capacity to arbitrate in political issues.

Assistance by the military and paramilitary agencies might arise in three contexts: (a) humanitarian search and rescue in disasters; (b) maintaining essential movement and supplies in a crisis; (c) supporting civilian agencies when they are unable to maintain law and order.

In general, the use of military forces in tasks under (a) are unlikely to be opposed in principle by civilians because issues of rules of engagement (ROE) are unlikely to arise. Indeed, such humanitarian actions can improve civil–military relations. By contrast, the widespread criticism of the Turkish military’s performance following the earthquake of August 1999 demonstrates that failure to participate effectively in a domestic crisis can damage the reputation and credibility of military institutions.

However, in war-torn societies, the provisions under (b) and (c) are bound to be more controversial because of the potential for political masters to use secur-

ity forces for repression and for military leaders to take control. It may be advisable to remove these 'political' functions from military and quasi-military civil emergency forces, as has happened in Haiti and Kosovo. It would also be appropriate to develop local civil-sector capacities to steer and monitor domestic military assistance. It is not clear whether this is happening in Kosovo. The Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC)'s prime function is, in theory, to respond to disasters. However, many Albanian Kosovars view it as the nucleus of a future army. Although currently overseen by the Kosovo Force (KFOR) and the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), there has been limited capacity-building to enable local civilians to replace these international supervisors.<sup>102</sup>

The UK has a historically unique approach to such issues, and the various dimensions of military aid to the civil authorities reflect an ad hoc accumulation of constitutional provisions and organisational arrangements. Nevertheless, two of the distinctive features of the UK approach could certainly be incorporated into civil–military relations in war-torn societies: the primacy of civilian control; and extremely rigorous ROE safeguards.

### *Enhancing the engagement of civil society*

According to DFID's December 2000 White Paper, *Eliminating World Poverty: Making Globalisation Work for the Poor*:

*It is vital that poor people should have a say over government spending decisions . . . We also support reforms to police and criminal justice systems, that make them more accessible and responsive to the needs of the poor . . . The voices of the poor can be strengthened by supporting those parts of civil society that help poor people organise to influence decision makers . . . Promoting effective and inclusive systems of government, including an accountable security sector, is an essential investment in the prevention of violent conflict.*<sup>103</sup>

These intentions imply increasing the capacity of post-conflict societies to engage in, for example, the effective and accountable monitoring of demilitarisation and military expenditure, and the institutionalisation of co-operative civil–military relations. However, a higher importance is generally given to training military personnel and helping military conversion or reform than to assisting in the development of civil society. The few instances in which funding has been given to civil-society movements to monitor security sectors include:

- a Netherlands–Mali initiative that has involved civil-society organisations in the formulation of a code of conduct on the security sector’s role in society;
- UK funding for the provision of legal materials and training to NGOs and professional organisations to underpin reform of, and wider access to, justice systems in Rwanda;
- Finnish and Swedish support to NGO projects for education and policy-making access on a range of democracy and rights-based programmes in Africa; and
- Norwegian and British funding for seminars and training on democratisation for defence researchers in South Africa and Zimbabwe.<sup>104</sup>

Projects to assist in the transformation of civil–military relations can be incorporated into general school education and basic rights programmes. There is also a case for more specific projects on civil–military issues because of the level of secrecy and expertise with which military and other security services protect themselves. Engaging civil society may mean funding training, workshops and conferences and the provision of legal materials. It may also mean subsidising broadcasting or publications, such as special issues of journals, that incorporate the views of non-uniformed commentators. It can also mean helping local NGOs to put forward their views on issues like child soldiers, demobilisation schemes, conscientious objection and freedom of information legislation.

Civil-society groups need to be integrated into negotiations over peace and disarmament right from the start, not least because they may have a moderating

influence on military actors. If this is not done, security-sector reform can become an afterthought, considered only once the essential parameters of post-war security structures have been established in agreements with warlords or militaries whose main concern is often maintaining their influence, rather than transforming the status quo.

The record is, however, mixed. In Northern Ireland, the Good Friday negotiations were underpinned by substantial British government support for NGOs from both sides of the religious divide and a women's peace group was included in the negotiations, albeit on the margins.<sup>105</sup> But in Kosovo and East Timor, civil actors have often been excluded.<sup>106</sup> For instance, the passive resistance of Kosovo's Albanians went unrewarded at Dayton and subsequently, the KLA, the most militaristic section of Kosovar society, was rapidly transformed in Western perceptions from a terrorist organisation into the political voice of the Kosovars, despite its initially limited following. Before and during the Rambouillet talks of February 1999, Ibrahim Rugova's League for a Democratic Kosovo (LDK) was relegated to the role of subsidiary partner, despite being the elected government of the Kosovar Albanians. The Undertaking on Demilitarisation that followed the Kosovo conflict was agreed exclusively between NATO forces and the KLA. Even in subsequent negotiations over the creation of the KPC, only KFOR, UNMIK and the KLA were directly involved. The Undertaking on Demilitarisation set up a Joint Implementation Commission (JIC) solely comprised of representatives of KFOR, the KLA and UNMIK. Partly as a consequence of the structures created by the Undertaking, former KLA personnel have a disproportionate influence in the local police force being created in Kosovo, and in the KPC. Given the regular reports of ex-KLA personnel intimidating and murdering Serb and Albanian political opponents, this is likely to present problems in the future, whatever the region's ultimate constitutional status.

In the context of poverty alleviation, the UK has noted that, where governments are not committed to human rights, alternative channels will be explored, namely 'the institutions of civil society, voluntary agencies and local govern-

ment'.<sup>107</sup> This principle might be adopted in modified form, including in cases where conditions for security-sector reform are favourable. Adopting it would mean fostering such channels to enhance transformative processes at the same time as other, state-based reforms are devised. It could also be modified to treat the civil channels of opinion formation not as alternatives, but as complements, to formal constitutional provisions.

## Civil society and policy formulation and monitoring

The level of civilian expertise or interest in defence and security policy might be extremely low.<sup>108</sup> However, rights-based women's groups, experts in the media, researchers and professionals, such as health workers can make important contributions to the formulation and implementation of policy. The role of such groups in institutionalising the peace process in Mali, for example, has been well documented.<sup>109</sup> Consequently, greater investment might be directed towards introducing processes that reduce both the militarisation of societies and the alienation of the military from civil society. Such investment would be used to gain the widest possible support for the definition of new military functions and security doctrines. For example, public-service workers and Red Cross/Crescent organisations might be involved in formulating rules governing the use of the military in civil disasters and emergency relief. Rights-based women's groups and peace groups might be engaged in discussions concerning rules on conscientious objection, recruitment policies, demobilisation compensation and the welfare rights of military personnel. Civil organisations can also monitor the functioning of security forces; DFID has signalled its support for 'integrity checks including the watchdog and representational role of civil society'.<sup>110</sup>

Various types of organisation can become channels of policy debate, although there is no inherent predisposition for them to adopt transformative approaches. Indeed, political parties and veterans' organisations are not necessarily interested in depoliticising the military, or in curbing any praetorian political aspirations it might have.

**Political parties** The level of interest in military security policy seems to depend on whether political élites seek to represent particular issues as security problems.<sup>111</sup> This ‘securitisation’ might depend on the construction of threats (‘enemies of the state’, for example). It might stem from the need for politicians to gain an advantage over their opponents. Or it might be employed to safeguard special interests, such as the security of an ethnic group or defence-related employment.

**Veterans’ organisations** These groups might be expected to take a keen interest in military affairs, but they vary widely in their goals and objectives. Some are simply military coups or paramilitary units in waiting. Others are committed to civilian primacy, but are highly partisan and foster a culture of coercive peace. Others are driven more by welfare needs, including employment for ex-soldiers, and they can be highly critical of secrecy and intransigence in military establishments. Nevertheless, their potential should be explored. A good case in point is the Centre for Civil–Military Relations in Belgrade, Serbia, which was established in 1995 by critics of Slobodan Milosevic’s regime and its military leaders. Many members were forced into early retirement after 20 or 30 years of service in the Yugoslav National Army. Since 1997, the Centre has promoted the idea of transparency in civil–military relations, and democratic control over the armed forces. One of its main objectives has been ‘to animate [the] professional and political interest of citizens, their associations, political parties, parliamentary and state organs for a modern arrangement of civil–military relations’. It has raised funds and charged for consultancy work. What might be described as ‘foreign carpet-baggers’ arriving in the aftermath of Milosevic’s downfall, to educate the Yugoslav political élite in the ways of civilian control, have either ignored the Centre, or failed to accord it due respect.<sup>112</sup>

**Educational and intellectual groups** Within the academic/educational sector, courses and research programmes on issues ranging from military history to disaster response are a significant source of debate and contesting theories. They may appear in unlikely settings; the University of Illorin in Nigeria, for example,

has a Conflict Resolution Centre, and produces a journal that carries reflective articles on Nigeria's military policy. Institutes studying military policy, strategy and defence are a recognised feature of most Western societies. They may be close to the prevailing military culture, overwhelmingly realist in outlook and dependent on cultivating state interests, but they will also often take a provocative line. NGOs engaged in campaigning and/or consultancy can also present clear alternatives to existing military policy. An interesting and successful experiment in South Africa from the mid-1990s saw NGOs involved in the drafting of the country's White Paper on Peace Missions (1999).<sup>113</sup>

**Functional associations and voluntary groups** Groups that have an indirect role in forming public opinion on military issues include:

- trade unions and employers affected by changes in military expenditure and industrialisation;
- women's groups affected by the mobilisation and demobilisation of soldiers;
- church and welfare groups with interests in humanitarian, moral and philosophical aspects of security policy;
- environmental groups interested in protecting or managing areas affected by military despoliation or training;
- media organisations and journalists' associations that have a commitment to investigative reporting; and
- rights-based groups, such as branches of Amnesty International, local citizens forums and local Helsinki Citizens Assemblies.

To take just one of these examples, rights-based women's groups and prominent women's leaders have been particularly active in demanding justice against repressive and brutal military regimes, from protests over the 'disappeared' in Chile and Argentina to Aung San Suu Kyi's activism in Burma. Of course, women have also encouraged or participated in violence in Sri Lanka, Rwanda and elsewhere.<sup>114</sup> But women's peace groups have also worked through education and

protest to shape public opinion. They have demonstrated against warlords in Somalia, Mozambique, Sierra Leone and Sri Lanka. The National Co-ordination of Guatemalan Widows has campaigned against the conscription of young men, partly to resist military socialisation and partly to keep sons economically active at home.<sup>115</sup> Women's organisations have demanded, and participated in, tribunals and truth commissions to campaign for justice, compensation and reconciliation. In October 2000, the United Nations Security Council, in discussing women and conflict, endorsed such demands, including support for women's peace initiatives and their involvement in the implementation of peace agreements.<sup>116</sup> Women are often marginalised themselves and, as Birgitte Sørensen points out, are particularly effective in reaching other marginalised groups and counter-acting the creation of hostile stereotypes.<sup>117</sup> Women have also been involved in peace processes, notably as part of Palestinian delegations and in negotiations over the Good Friday agreement in Northern Ireland. These are, however, exceptions, and in general women are seldom present in formal peace processes, either as individuals or as group representatives. As Sørensen notes, women may be given a voice for particular purposes (to testify against war criminals, for example), but are then re-marginalised.<sup>118</sup> Even if there is no repressive authority exerting control over information, cultural norms may limit participation.

The extent to which civil-society groups are present or can be encouraged in conflict-torn societies will vary considerably from situation to situation. For instance, the ability of intellectual groups to generate widespread debate will depend on levels of literacy. The absence of an education infrastructure in weak states may mean that there is little role for civil society in governance generally, and security governance in particular. In conflict zones, the Western conception of civil society as having a 'watchdog' role is often alien.

Furthermore, the access to policy-making processes of civil society is likely to be a contested and contentious issue—even where 'demilitarisation', with its implied transparency, is a primary goal of peace enforcement. Ideally, security-sector reform is a transparent and open process. Indeed, demilitarisation may

only be possible as a consequence of publicity and verification because, in politically tense circumstances where engendering trust between adversaries is an incremental process, highly visible activities are necessary to preclude subterfuge and accusations of cheating. In Zimbabwe, the demobilisation of guerrillas and their integration into a new security force was largely transparent.<sup>119</sup> The transparent decommissioning of Irish Republican Army (IRA) weapons has been a litmus test of the viability of the Good Friday agreement. But generally, people and organisations daring to shed light on security sectors or on human-rights abuse and corruption are liable to be repressed and eliminated, even in the shadow of a large international presence. Journalists in Bosnia who have exposed corruption have received death threats, or have been the target of assassination attempts.<sup>120</sup> In some circumstances, it would be irresponsible for external actors to increase the risks of abuse by sanctioning or subsidising the work of rights groups.

## Democratic deficits in external institutions

When external actors fail to abide by the standards they attempt to impose on others, resistance to this imposition is likely to increase. The democratic foundations of any project imposed from outside will lack credibility if the security sectors of intervening states are devoid of transparency and accountability.

The directors of international security organisations, including the UN, are not always promoted to their positions on merit, nor are they always accountable to elected bodies. UN administrations in Kosovo and East Timor have resembled the weak states they are supposed to reform. They are staffed by foreigners who may live secluded from the general population, earn significantly higher salaries, and are on short-term contracts, with similarly short planning horizons. In addition, the organisations they work for are over-centralised, and often seem to expend as much energy on 'turf battles' with other organisations as they do on addressing the problems of the country itself. The United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), for instance, strongly opposed a World

Bank project intended to facilitate the establishment of elected village and sub-district councils composed of equal numbers of men and women. UNTAET even went so far as to argue that it could not approve gender equality, that international staff needed to control community involvement and that the Timorese would confuse elections for local officials with national elections. In reality, this opposition was motivated by the fact that UN staff would have no influence over the councils, nor would they control their expenditures.<sup>121</sup>

States contributing to peace-enforcement operations, such as Nigeria, Pakistan and Turkey, have limited civilian controls over their militaries. In others, police forces abide by only minimum standards of accountability and openness. Even states that pride themselves on domestic models that they expect others to adopt are prone to offend. They may not tolerate civil-society debate on security policy, cite *raison d'état* to strangle healthy discussion of security issues or maintain the apparatus of a security state that fosters secrecy, restricts information and recites propaganda. In 1999, the committee advising the Swedish Foreign Ministry on the funding of civil-society organisations flouted its own rules by withdrawing funding from an organisation critical of NATO policy.<sup>122</sup> In addressing public disquiet over the possible health risks posed by depleted uranium shells and missiles, the UK MOD refused a full investigation—allowing only veterans from the Balkans conflict, not the Gulf War, to be screened—and initially dismissed its own leaked reports warning of the hazard.<sup>123</sup> The draft Freedom of Information Act developed for Bosnia in June 2000 appears to be more open than the proposed legislation in the UK.<sup>124</sup>

The security goals of the major external powers may themselves encourage or dictate complicity in secrecy and corruption. This is particularly the case with arms deals, as a succession of scandals have shown: arms to Iraq, the Pergau Dam, the Sandline affair, as well as the various scandals surrounding former French and German Presidents François Mitterrand and Helmut Kohl.<sup>125</sup>

In these circumstances, the prospects for civil control, civil-society debate and oversight of the security sector may be limited by the attitude of external actors.

There is unlikely to be a strong push for transparency and democratisation by outside powers if this draws attention to the absence of healing among the physicians themselves. Outside actors may even be predisposed to collude with local strongmen. There may be a coincidence of interest between peace-implementation forces and emerging local security forces in protecting themselves from investigation. A transformative approach to security sectors would give greater consideration than has traditionally been the case to the civil-society dimension of civil–military relations. To rephrase Georges Clemenceau’s famous dictum: ‘Security sector reform is too serious a business to be left to soldiers’.

## Embedding socio-political safeguards in post-conflict reconstruction

A ‘security-first’ philosophy should be embedded not only in programmes that have an obvious impact on security, such as police reform, but also in post-conflict reconstruction projects. It should also be included in funding criteria of programmes that may not have lateral benefits in terms of security protection for the civil population. While post-conflict security for local populations may often involve ‘hard’ security measures, such as protection by local or UN forces, there are also a range of ‘soft’ measures that can reduce risk to local populations. Repairing the infrastructure is one straightforward example. When electricity supplies were restored in Pristina, for example, street lighting reappeared and the murder rate dropped.<sup>126</sup> Other reconstruction measures would be designed to provide employment and welfare, reducing the dependence of the poor on crime and the ‘welfare safety nets’ provided by criminal networks. Accordingly, socio-economic security would underpin military security by reducing the power of, and popular support for, warlords whose primary motives may be greed.<sup>127</sup>



# Conclusion

Current thinking about security-sector reform represents an evolution in ideas about the role of development aid, and its relationship to the security sector. To some extent, this reflects a more general post-Cold War recognition that the provision of security does not simply equate to clientist military aid designed to protect government élites. It also reflects a recognition of the complexity of contemporary conflicts, and the ways in which corruption, deficiencies in governance and legitimacy and arms proliferation combine to heighten both state and individual insecurity.

Equally, however, focusing on the security sector per se risks separating both analysis and practice from wider issues, including the political economy of conflicts and the ways in which the economic and security policies of developed states can perpetuate local war economies. Unless these broader issues are addressed, initiatives to promote civilian oversight of the military or the provision of a few weeks' human-rights training will not be effective in the long term. While the governance of the security sector is now being addressed, the resources provided to enhance civilian oversight are often outweighed by those devoted to boosting military capacity and 'professionalism'. There is no substitute for knowledge of the local security dynamics of war-torn societies, and the diverse roles that weaponry plays in different cultures. External actors need to tailor their efforts to the social and political circumstances of each society, and to balance the urge to engineer with the need for local ownership.

In developed states, including the UK, there are signs that policy co-ordination has increased. But there is still a risk that policy can be co-opted by special interest groups, notably military–industrial actors, whose interests may not always coincide with security-sector reform in conflict-prone societies. This

may result in incoherent or contradictory policies. Finally, the emphasis on ‘reform’ underplays the extent of the shortfalls in security-sector governance and policies, particularly in weak states.

An alternative approach would be to locate changes in security sectors within a broader transformative framework. This might entail, for example, replacing exit strategies that hobble the development of long-term policies towards post-conflict societies with engagement strategies that conceive peacebuilding as a lengthy process. More specifically, security-sector transformation would attempt to rebalance economic structures and the socio-political environment so as to reduce the incentives for militarisation, and encourage a more nuanced approach to the varied security needs of societies. Security-sector transformation would encompass reform, but also address the broader political economy of conflicts and the role that the policies of developed states play in fostering instability. Finally, a transformative approach would engage with a wider set of actors, issues and security concerns, and in a manner that expands and empowers the ‘islands of civility’ in war-torn societies.

The following general recommendations, and specific proposals that might be addressed in the UK, are derived from this analysis of a transformative approach.

- A global tax on defence sales should be adopted to raise money for conflict prevention or peacekeeping. In raising the cost of arms, the tax would also reduce the volume of arms in circulation.
- Where companies or states are found knowingly to have breached a UN arms embargo, the government or citizens of the state to which arms have been supplied should be able to sue the firm or state responsible, and to claim reparations. These could be put towards the costs of demilitarisation and peacebuilding.
- Greater consideration should be given to embargoes on the purchase of weapons from producer countries that consistently violate international agreements on arms sales.

- Peace agreements should emphasise the need for transparency, not only in governance, but also in the operation of key economic sectors. Capacity-building programmes could be developed to improve the ability of government and civil-society groups to manage or monitor the operation of key trading assets. A focal point should also be created within the UN to report on and prevent the trade in conflict goods.
- As a rule, the separation of powers should extend to the removal of the military from control of the judicial system and government departments, including defence ministries, albeit with the proviso that appropriate channels need to be in place for the military to pursue its legitimate interests.
- It would be appropriate to regulate the use of reconstructed armed forces in civil emergencies and domestic crises in order to limit their potential for an autonomous political role.
- More projects to promote civil-society's engagement with the security sector, and its monitoring capacity, should be fostered. External actors should explore the potential for supporting a wide variety of organisations that could become channels for debate on security-sector issues. These include political parties, veterans' organisations, education and intellectual groups, functional associations like trade unions and employers affected by security-sector policies and voluntary groups (environmental, religious and women's groups).
- Transformation processes and civil-society groups should be integrated into peacebuilding from the outset. This implies involving civil-society groups in negotiations over peace and disarmament from the start. Otherwise security-sector reform can become an afterthought, considered only when the shape of post-war security structures has been settled by foreign diplomats and warlords.
- A 'security-first' philosophy should be embedded not only in programmes that have an obvious impact on security, such as police reform, but also in the funding criteria of post-conflict programmes more generally. Programmes not directly related to the provision of security, like job creation, may provide lateral improvements in the security environment.

- The UK government should provide a more detailed definition of the criteria used to decide exceptions to the principle of withholding export credits to HIPC/IDA states for unproductive expenditure.
- Where export credits are furnished for security-related expenditure, this information should be provided in the government's *Annual Report on Strategic Exports*, particularly when recipients are covered by the HIPC/IDA initiative.
- The group of states covered by the prohibition on export credits for unproductive expenditure should be broadened to include all countries that receive UK development assistance and those that have recently defaulted on payments for defence contracts.
- A modified version of a defence sales tax (see the fourth proposal in this list) could be operated unilaterally by the UK by raising the defence export levy, consistently applying and hypothecating the proceeds to fund conflict-prevention initiatives or end-use monitoring.
- Economic criteria in both the UK and the EU arms-export codes should be interpreted in a way that allows the cumulative impact of defence sales to be taken into account.
- The British government might consider establishing an annual ethical audit of UK companies. This would examine their role in supporting the war economies of contemporary conflicts, and the steps they have taken to guard against complicity in conflict trade.
- The UK government could consider funding research on the role played by civil-society groups in situ and diasporas generally and on the ways in which they might be drawn into conflict prevention and peacebuilding in particular states or regions.

# Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Ball, N., 'Transforming Security Sectors: the IMF and World Bank Approaches', *Journal of Conflict, Security & Development*, 1:1, Centre for Defence Studies, 2001, p. 47.
- <sup>2</sup> See Ball, N., 'Transforming the Security Sector in Weak States: the role of external actors', paper presented at the conference 'State Collapse and Reconstruction: Lessons and Strategies', International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)/Institut Universitaire de Hautes Etudes Internationales, Geneva, 7–9 December 2000, p. 4.
- <sup>3</sup> OECD, 'Security Issues and Development Co-operation: a conceptual framework for enhancing policy performance', *The DAC Journal*, vol. 2, no. 3, 2001, 11–51. However, the DAC report retains the term 'reform' (11–35 & n.3), whereas both Rocklyn Williams and Nicole Ball suggest the label 'security-sector transformation', Ball, N., 'Transforming the Security Sector in Weak States'. See also the Security Sector Transformation Programme at the Institute for Security Studies, Pretoria, available at [www.iss.co.za](http://www.iss.co.za).
- <sup>4</sup> Collier, P., 'Economic Causes of Civil Conflict and Their Implications for Policy', World Bank, 15 June 2000, available at [www.globalpolicy.org/security/issues/diamond/wb.htm](http://www.globalpolicy.org/security/issues/diamond/wb.htm).
- <sup>5</sup> Supply-side initiatives include limitations or embargoes on the provision of particular types of equipment, training and technology to specified states or regions.
- <sup>6</sup> See Keen, D., 'War and Peace: What's the Difference?' in Adebajo, A. and Sriram, C.L. (eds), *Managing Conflicts in the 21st Century*, (London: Frank Cass, 2001), pp. 1–22.
- <sup>7</sup> Stanley, W., 'Building New Police Forces in El Salvador and Guatemala: Learning and Counter-Learning', in Holm, T. T. and Eide, E. B., (eds), *Peacebuilding and Police Reform* (London: Frank Cass, 2000), p. 118.
- <sup>8</sup> See Pugh, M., *Protectorates and Spoils of Peace: Intermestic Manipulations of Political Economy in South-East Europe*, COPRI Working Paper 36, (Copenhagen: Copenhagen Peace Research Institute, 2000), *passim*.
- <sup>9</sup> Strazzari, F., *Kosovo 1999–2000, The Intractable Peace. A Radiography of the Post-War Year* (Florence: European University Institute, 2000); and Vickers, M., *Between Serb and Albanian: A History of Kosovo* (London: Hurst, 1998).
- <sup>10</sup> Rose, G., 'The Exit Strategy Delusion', *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 77, no. 1, January–February 1998, pp. 56–57; Benson, K.C.M. and Thrash, C.B., 'Declaring Victory: Planning Exit Strategies for Peace Operations', *Parameters*, vol. 26, no. 3, 1996, pp. 69–80.

<sup>11</sup> See Ero, C., *Sierra Leone's Security Complex*, The Conflict, Security and Development Group Working Papers, no. 3, Centre for Defence Studies, June 2000, p. 63.

<sup>12</sup> Mani, R., 'Contextualizing Police Reform: Security, the Rule of Law and Post-Conflict Peacebuilding', in Holm, T.T. and Eide, E.B. (eds), *Peacebuilding and Police Reform*, 1999, p. 14.

<sup>13</sup> Mathiak, L., and Lumpe, L., 'Government Gun-running to Guerrillas', in Lumpe, L. (ed), *Running Guns: The Global Black Market in Small Arms*, (London: Zed Books in Association with the International Peace Research Institute (PRIO), 2000), p. 61.

<sup>14</sup> For an overview of the literature on military expenditure and economic growth, see Chan, S., 'The Impact of Defense Spending on Economic Performance: A Survey of Evidence and Problems', *Orbis*, summer 1985, pp. 403–34; Sandler, T. and Hartley, K., *The Economics of Defence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 200–220; and Ball, N., *Security and Economy in the Third World*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988).

<sup>15</sup> For a critical analysis of the meaning of 'human security', see Suhrke, A., 'Human Security and the Interests of States', *Security Dialogue*, vol. 30, no. 3, 1999, pp. 265–276.

<sup>16</sup> See Duffield, M., 'NGO Relief in War Zones: Towards an Analysis of the New Aid Paradigm', *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 18, no. 3, 1999, pp. 527–42.

<sup>17</sup> Greene, O., *Tackling Light Weapons Proliferation: Issues and Priorities for the EU*, (London: Saferworld, April 1997), pp. 18–19; Greene, O., 'Tackling Illicit Arms Trafficking and Small Arms Proliferation', paper presented at the British International Studies Association Annual Conference, University of Sussex, UK, 14–16 December 1998, pp. 6–7.

<sup>18</sup> Smith, C., 'Security-sector reform: development breakthrough or institutional engineering?', *Journal of Conflict, Security and Development*, 1:1, Centre for Defence Studies, 2001, p. 6.

<sup>19</sup> Stevenson, J., *Preventing Conflict: The Role of the Bretton Woods Institutions*, Adelphi Paper 336 (Oxford: Oxford University Press for the International Institute for Strategic Studies, October 2000).

<sup>20</sup> Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, *SIPRI Yearbook 2001: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 123.

<sup>21</sup> Clare Short, Secretary of State for International Development, speech at International Alert, London, 2 November 1999.

<sup>22</sup> Clare Short, 'Security Sector Reform and the Elimination of Poverty', speech at Kings College London, 9 March 1999.

<sup>23</sup> UK Ministry of Defence, *The Strategic Defence Review: Supporting Essays*, (London: HMSO, July 1998), p. 4-1, paragraph 3.

<sup>24</sup> Ero, C., 'A Critical Assessment of Britain's Africa Policy', *Journal of Conflict, Security and Development*, 1: 2, Centre for Defence Studies, 2001, pp. 51–71.

<sup>25</sup> For example, the UK has announced a three year £19.5m Strategy on Small Arms under which it intends to provide long-term support to UN agencies for arms control and reduction measures, an example being a planned £7.5m disbursement to support the United Nations Development Pro-

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<sup>26</sup> Centre for Defence Studies, The Conflict, Security and Development Group, *Bulletin*, (Special Issue on Indonesia), no. 10, March–April 2001; International Crisis Group, *Indonesia: Next Steps in Military Reform*, ICG Asia Report no. 24, 11 October 2001.

<sup>27</sup> *Security Sector Reform and the Management of Military Expenditure: High Risks for Donors, High Returns for Development*, report of an international symposium sponsored by the Department for International Development, London, 15–17 February 2000, pp. 18–19.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, Annex 1, p. 26.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, Annex 1, p. 34.

<sup>30</sup> Crawford-Browne, T., *President Thabo Mbeki's R48 Billion Handshake: Sweden's Bae/Saab Jas39 Gripens and the Human Rights Watch Report on South Africa's Arms Trade*, (Cape Town: Economists Allied for Arms Reduction, November 2000).

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<sup>32</sup> Kaldor, M., *New and Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era*, (Cambridge: Polity, 1999), p. 110.

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<sup>36</sup> Neuman, S.G., 'Controlling the Arms Trade: Idealistic Dream or Realpolitik?', *Washington Quarterly*, vol. 16, no. 3, summer 1993, pp. 53–75.

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<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.

<sup>39</sup> UK House of Commons, *Hansard*, 5 May 1998, wa, col. 263.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 2 July 2000, w, col. 24.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 9 February 2000, w, col. 216; and 21 February 2000, w, col. 835.

<sup>42</sup> *Human Development Report 1994*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press for the UNDP, 1995), p. 57; and Levine, P. and Smith, R., 'The Arms Trade and Arms Control', *Economic Journal*, 105:429, March 1995, pp. 471–84.

<sup>43</sup> Mo, C., 'Financing the United Nations: Developing a World Tax System', paper presented at the American Political Studies Association annual conference, Atlanta, GA, 2–5 September 1999, p. 20; McKibbin, W., 'A New Military Equilibrium? Preventing Regional Conflicts in the Developing World', *Brooking's Bulletin*, vol. 11, no. 4, 1993, pp. 43–45.

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<sup>46</sup> UN House of Commons, *Hansard*, 22 June 1998, WA, col. 375.

<sup>47</sup> United Nations, Report of the Panel of Experts on Violations of Security Council Sanctions Against UNITA, S/2000/203, 10 March 2000; United Nations, Report of the Panel of Experts Appointed Pursuant to UN Security Council Resolution 1306 (2000), Paragraph 19 in relation to Sierra Leone, S/2000/1195, 20 December 2000; United Nations, Addendum to the final report of the Monitoring Mechanism on Sanctions against UNITA, S/2001/363, 11 April 2001.

<sup>48</sup> 'Truckers Fight Fines for Illegal Immigrants', *The Guardian*, 7 December 1998.

<sup>49</sup> House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee, Minutes of Evidence, 22 May 2000. Sierra Leone: Mr Peter Hain MP and Mr J. Bevan, HC 519-I, 20 July 2000, at [www.publications.parliament.uk](http://www.publications.parliament.uk).

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<sup>58</sup> Data based on personal communication with Camilla Waszink of the Small Arms Survey. See also UNDP at [www.undp.org/erd/archives/brochures/small\\_arms](http://www.undp.org/erd/archives/brochures/small_arms).

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