



GENEVA CENTRE FOR THE DEMOCRATIC CONTROL OF
ARMED FORCES (DCAF)

WORKING PAPER – NO. 143

SECURITY SECTOR TRANSFORMATION IN AFGHANISTAN

Mark Sedra

*Researcher, School for Oriental and African Studies (SOAS),
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Geneva, August 2004

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SECURITY SECTOR TRANSFORMATION IN AFGHANISTAN¹

Mark Sedra

Introduction

The U.S.-led Coalition's swift victory over the Taliban regime in October 2001 created a security vacuum across Afghanistan that the international community was unprepared to fill. Winning the peace in Afghanistan has proven to be a much more complex, costly, and protracted endeavour than winning the war, an imposing burden that has severely tested the resolve of the international donor community. With only 11,000-13,000 Coalition troops mandated to eradicate the last remnants of *al-Qaeda* and the Taliban in the south and a limited NATO presence of 6,000 troops deployed in the capital to insulate the fledgling political process, the onus for maintaining security in the country fell on the Afghan government and its fledgling security forces. After 23 years of civil war the country's security sector was in a state of disarray, its infrastructure destroyed, resources limited, and facing a shortage of human capacity. To bolster Afghanistan's beleaguered security institutions and ensure they conform to international standards, the major donors engaged in the country launched a security sector reform (SSR) process. Security sector transformation rather than reform seems more appropriate to describe the task of creating efficient, effective, and democratically accountable security forces in Afghanistan, for the bulk of the country's formal security apparatus ceased to function over a decade ago. In spite of the massive challenges that face program, it has been portrayed as the primary means to redress Afghanistan's immediate security woes. What by its very nature is a gradual, long-term process has been thrust into the position as short-term panacea.

In many respects, it is the "minimalist approach" employed by the international community towards Afghanistan's security dilemma that has placed the process in this problematic position, which it is ill-suited to confront (Bhatia et al., 2004, p. 3). The consequences of this distortion of the process have been far-reaching. In the interest of expediency, some of the program's core principles of democracy and

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accountable have been sacrificed. Fixated on churning out troops and police to confront the growing security morass, initiatives to institute civilian control over the security sector have been under resourced and even ignored. In a country where, in the recent past, the basic rights of the citizenry have been transgressed so brazenly by statutory security forces, such an approach is irresponsible and imprudent. Predictably, the net benefit of efforts to accelerate the security sector reform process has been marginal as the output of the training programs has not kept pace with the deterioration of security conditions.

This chapter aims to show that despite some important advancements made in the two years that have elapsed since the Afghan SSR process was launched, the program lacks the necessary tools to achieve its aims. The lack of a viable overarching strategic plan to guide and coordinate the process, the lack of peacekeeping troops to facilitate its implementation, and the lack of resources to underwrite its operationalization have limited its impact and caused it to stray from its core principles. However, these imposing obstacles should not divert attention from another major reason for the program's poor performance; the inadequacy of the conventional SSR model to meet the challenges of a complex post-conflict environment. The SSR model, based on a Western conception of security alien to Afghanistan, is dependent on certain preconditions—a minimum level of security and political stability; local elite consensus on its strategy and goals; and a base level of institutional infrastructure and human capacity—all of which are absent in the Afghan context.

The chapter is divided into four sections. The first will offer a detailed description of the Afghan security sector reform process and the security institutions it is targeting. The second section will analyse ongoing efforts to instil principles of good governance in the security sector and clearly subordinate it to civilian authority. Section three will provide an overview of the threats to the process, most notably the deteriorating security situation. The final section will offer lessons from the experience of implementation with insight on how the process can be made more effective. The chapter will end with some broad recommendations on how the process can be set on the right path.

The Geneva Process

Afghanistan's security sector reform process was launched with two security donor meetings held in Geneva in the spring of 2002. The two meetings set the agenda for the program and laid the groundwork for a multi-sectoral donor support scheme. The process was divided into five pillars, each to be overseen by a lead-donor nation—military reform (U.S.-lead); police reform (German-lead); disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants (Japan-lead); judicial reform (Italy-lead); and counter-narcotics (UK-lead). From the outset this framework served to impede rather than advance the process. The wide range in donor competencies coupled with competing political visions of the lead donors has obstructed coordination and joint planning; fostered donor turf wars; and deprived the process of much needed cross-pillar leadership and initiative. The rationale behind the scheme was sound; it assumed that giving donors a direct stake in the process would guarantee long-term support. In actuality the scheme has disjointed the process preventing the formation of much needed synergies across the breadth of its programs. The following is an analysis of developments in each of the five pillars of this process:

Military Reform

The cornerstone of the military reform pillar is the creation of a multi-ethnic and non-factional Afghan National Army (ANA). Training and equipping ANA recruits has received the bulk of the attention of the United States, the lead donor for military reform. The other component of this pillar, the reform of the Ministry of Defence, has received considerably less attention despite the fact that it is the lynchpin for the process. The ANA will eventually be subordinated to this institution, which remains dysfunctional and riven with corruption. Until the Ministry is subjected to comprehensive reform, the strides made to train the ANA will be for naught.

Afghan National Army (ANA)

The U.S. military began training the first intake of Afghan recruits on 14 May 2002 at the country's former military academy on the outskirts of Kabul, renamed the Kabul Military Training Center (KMTC). The U.S. programme was originally based on a ten-week training cycle with two classes or cohorts of 750 recruits being trained simultaneously. To accelerate the process, the training cycle was reduced to eight

weeks in the fall of 2003 and an additional class was established in early 2004. These measures have aroused criticism that the training program is insufficiently rigorous to provide the recruits the skills and expertise they will require to operate in Afghanistan's hostile security environment. The programme produced its first *kandak* (battalion) in July 2002 and emitted a total of 15 *kandaks*, the entire Central Corps, by March 2004. This marked the completion of Phase I of the program. Phase II will involve the establishment of four regional corps, mirroring the Central; Corps, to be situated in the north, south, east, and west of the country. Ongoing specialist training is also being provided by Mobile Training Teams (MTT) with support from local PRTs. The original aim of the program was to train 18,000 troops by October 2003; however, as of June 2004, only 11,000 ANA recruits had graduated. High desertion rates accounted for the programme's inability to meet its force targets. In the summer of 2003, the desertion rate reached 10 percent per month, corresponding to 72 percent on a yearly basis. The U.S. was able to gradually reduce desertions from a rate of 6 percent in November to a respectable 1.8 percent by May 2004 (Giustozzi & Sedra, 2003, p. 6). There are numerous reasons for the high desertion rates:

- *Recruitment:* The U.S. initially relied on the Ministry of Defence and regional military commanders to identify and deliver recruits for the ANA programme. This proved to be counterproductive as they tended to submit unqualified candidates while maintaining their best trained soldiers. In an effort to reform the recruitment process, the U.S. has launched a plan to establish National Army Volunteer Centers (NAVC) every provincial capital of the country. These offices will be staffed by specially-trained ANA officers, and will provide recruits with food and accommodation until they are deployed to the KMTC.
- *Ethnic Imbalance:* The issue of ethnic representation, which cuts across the entire SSR process, has complicated efforts to build a national army. At the beginning of the training process the pool of recruits featured a disproportionately large number of Tajiks, particularly at the officer level, a result of interference by the Tajik dominated Ministry of Defence. This fostered suspicion of the institution among other minority groups and had a deleterious effect on morale, as reports of abuse perpetrated by Tajik officers on recruits of other ethnic groups surfaced. The U.S. has taken a number of steps to address this inequity, primarily through improvements in the recruitment process, and have indicated that, as of spring 2004, the composition

of the force was roughly representative of the wider population with only small discrepancies remaining at the officer level.

- *Low Pay:* The issue of pay was the principal cause of the high ANA desertion rates. This problem was systematically addressed in mid-2003 when salaries were raised. The average pay for a recruit was raised significantly from \$50 per month to \$70 per month. In spite of this step, U.S. sources estimate, on the basis of a survey of ANA troops, that the salary level required to keep soldiers in the ranks is approximately \$150 per month. When operating in the field, ANA troops earn close to this figure, but the yearly average across the force still falls short, at about \$110 (Giustozzi & Sedra, 2003, p. 6).

More than 1/3 of the roughly 11,000 ANA troops that have completed the training process are deployed to Herat, Kandahar, Gardez and Mazar-i Sharif. They have been given a broad range of tasks in these missions, ranging from combat operations to security and stability assignments. These units have reportedly performed extremely well in these deployments and have been largely welcomed by local Afghan communities. The U.S. Military's Combined Operation Command Afghanistan (CFC-A) estimates that the force will reach a strength of 16,000 troops by the end of 2004 and its force ceiling of 70,000 troops by 2007.

In an effort to confront the worsening security situation the United States established an Afghan Guard Force (AGF) in the spring of 2004, modelled on the Iraqi National Guard erected by the U.S. Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA). The force will consist of 5,000-6,000 troops and will be utilized in a quick reaction capacity. Two weeks of basic training will be provided to members of the force. The decision to establish the AGF has been shrouded in controversy as it represents the formation of a militia auxiliary at a time when the government is endeavouring to breakdown militia structures throughout the country under the auspices of a DDR program. It is also unclear what mechanisms will be instituted guarantee the forces accountability to the central government.

Ministry of Defence (MoD) Reform

The Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Interior and the security services are dominated by one faction of the United Front or Northern Alliance, the Panjsheri Tajiks led by

Defence Minister Fahim. This faction was able to assert control of the security organs of Afghanistan at the Bonn Conference of December 2001, where it utilized its position as the military partner of the Coalition to exact important political concessions. In the aftermath of Bonn, Defence Minister Fahim worked assiduously to consolidate his control over the security sector. Illustrating this concerted effort, of the 100 generals appointed by Fahim during the interim administration, 90 were Panjsheri Tajiks (Manuel & Singer, 2002, pp. 44-59). Paralleling this effort to tighten his grip over Afghanistan's main security institutions, Fahim adopted an obstructionist role to the SSR process, particularly the military reform and DDR pillars.

Two attempts have been made thus far to implement institutional and personnel reforms within the Ministry of Defence. The first, in early 2003, resulted in some new appointments within the general staff; however, it did not significantly alter the balance of power within the Ministry. The second, launched in September 2003, saw 22 new appointments made, affecting all the senior positions within the Ministry, including five deputy ministers. The reforms installed a Pashtun, General Abdul Rahim Wardak, as the first deputy for the Army Chief of Staff and three additional deputies representing the Hazara, Uzbek, and Pashtun ethnicities. Although the appointments are significant, two of the three top posts within the ministry remained in the hands of the Panjsheri faction. The next phase of the reform process will be the appointment of 309 mid-ranking officials at the Ministry, the first 100 of which were announced in December 2003. The creation of a recruitment board in 2004, which will determine new appointments, should enhance both the speed and accountability of the process (Giustozzi & Sedra, 2003, p. 2).

The situation at the Ministry of Defence demonstrated the urgent need for civil service reform across the government. Corruption and factional influence is endemic and cannot be mitigated solely by removing a handful of senior leaders, although this is a vital component of the process. A bottom-up process that seeks to train, re-train and reshuffle the civil service in every Ministry, particularly those in the security sector, is urgently needed. This will undercut the clientelistic networks upon which leaders such as Fahim depend.

Police Reform

The bulk of Afghanistan's police have not received any form of police training; lack basic equipment, including firearms and transportation; and is chronically corrupt. Most are former *mujahidin* fighters that bring a militiaman's mentality to the job that is not conducive for effective policing. Afghanistan's police reform process was set in motion on 14-15 March 2002 when Germany, as the designated lead nation, introduced a comprehensive plan to create a national police service, titled the "German Project for Support of the Police in Afghanistan". Since March 2002, the project has launched a number of initiatives including: the re-establishment of the central command in Kabul and the initiation of a reform program for the Ministry of Interior; the rehabilitation of the Kabul Police Academy, responsible for training the officer and non-commissioned officer (NCO) corps of the police services; and the provision of equipment to enhance police communications and mobility.

In early 2003, the U.S. in an effort to expedite the formation of a professional national police service, established a centre in the capital to rapidly train rank-and-file police. The facility, called the Central Training Center (CTC), set an objective of training 7,000 officers in Kabul—3,000 at the basic level and 4,000 classified as already in service—over a one-year period. The U.S. commitment was subsequently expanded to include the construction of eight Regional Training Centers (RTC), mirroring the CTC. As of June 2004, six of the RTCs—in Kabul, Paktia, Jalalabad, Kunduz, Mazar-i Sharif, and Kandahar—had begun operation and two more—Bamiyan and Herat—were scheduled for construction by the end of 2004.

Together the German police project and the U.S. constabulary program aim to train 50,000 officers and 12,000 border guards over a three-year period, to be completed by December 2005. As of May 2004, the Kabul Police Academy had trained 5,000 commissioned and non-commissioned officers and the U.S. program had completed the training of 18,000 rank-and-file officers. Although the training process is progressing at a satisfactory pace, the overall police reform process has been slowed by a number of factors, including a lack of equipment, notably in the areas of communications and transportation; crumbling infrastructure; poor pay; corruption; and problems with recruitment. Training is a means to an end, not an end to itself. If the newly trained police are merely deployed to existing police posts throughout the

country, often consisting of decrepit buildings with little equipment, and continue to receive grossly inadequate pay, they will be drawn into previous criminal patterns.

The Ministry of Interior has a clear plan of action to address the shortcomings of the police but the bulk of it has yet to pique the interests of donors. To satisfy the transportation needs of the police the Ministry of Interior has planned for the acquisition of 3,500 four-wheel drive Russian Jeeps complete with radio equipment. As for the infrastructure needs of the Ministry it has devised succinct plans for the establishment of 12 provincial police headquarters buildings, 10 standby police buildings, and 80 highway police posts.

Border Police

With cross border crime and insurgency activity one of the foremost threats to security and stability in Afghanistan, the creation of an effective border police has been prioritised by the Afghan government and international community. The following steps have been taken towards this goal: the reconstruction of a border police headquarters in Kabul; the training of a special contingent of the border police who will serve as Kabul airport security and immigration officers; the commencement of a train-the-trainers course for border police instructors at the Kabul Police Academy that, by June 2004, had produced 300 trainers; and the construction of 25 border posts along the Iranian-Afghan border, funded by the government of Iran. The United States has also committed \$36.9 million to building border police infrastructure and enhancing communications. In spite of the resources committed to the project have been grossly inadequate. In 2003, the Federal Republic of Germany, the lead donor for Police Reform, dedicated only \$480,000 to the program, despite estimates that the creation of the force would cost, according to government estimates, between \$200 and \$250 million.

Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan (LOTFA)

In December 2002, UNDP established a Law & Order Trust Fund (LOTFA), whose principal purpose is to cover the recurrent salaries of the police. The fund is also intended to procure non-lethal equipment, to rehabilitate police facilities, and to strengthen law enforcement capacity across the country. The establishment of the trust fund marked a watershed in the police reform process; however, it has been hindered by fund-raising difficulties.

In its first year of operation the LOTFA disbursed \$52.7 million for police salaries, equipment, and the implementation of administrative reforms within the Ministry of Interior. Donors have levelled criticism at the Trust Fund's structure and accountability, due to reports that a large portion of the \$44.4 million that it disbursed to pay police salaries was misappropriated. Factors affecting the payment of salaries have been identified at various levels, including inadequate budget allotment mechanisms; the lack of sufficiently reliable payroll systems; and the absence of banking facilities at the provincial level. UNDP has taken a number of steps to address these problems, including the establishment of Joint Monitoring Missions, with the Ministry of Interior and Finance, to oversee the use of LOTFA and the computerization of the payroll system.

Originally scheduled to be dissolved by June 2004, the LOTFA has been extended to June 2005. As of June 2004, \$108.68 million had been dedicated to the fund, which, taking into consideration the expenditures of the previous year, leaves \$55.98 million of available funds. Ministry of Interior officials claim that they will require \$148.6 million to implement projects under the Fund's mandate in the coming year, leaving a shortfall of \$92.62 million. There have been few indications that donors will come forward to underwrite this second phase of the fund. In light of the lack of internal revenue flowing into government coffers, it is clear that donors will have to underwrite the process for several more years. The LOTFA provides an effective means to facilitate this support if it is fully exploited by donors.

The following is a breakdown of current pledges to LOTFA:

DONOR	RECEIVED/COMMITTED (in millions of USD)
European Commission	76.7
ARTF/World Bank	21.63
Canada	5.49
Germany	2.02

Norway	1.47
Switzerland	0.63
Ireland	0.54
Denmark	0.10
Finland	0.10
TOTAL	108.68

Ministry of Interior Reform

In spite of the appointment of a progressive and forward-thinking Minister, Ahmad Jalali, Afghanistan's Interior Ministry has been shown to be a largely dysfunctional institution, rivalling only the Defence Ministry in terms of corruption and mismanagement. According to available personnel statistics, the Ministry employs 93,000 people throughout the country, yet it lacks a coherent salary payment system; basic equipment; and coherent organizational structures. Germany and the U.S. have developed parallel schemes to reform the Ministry. Germany has contributed a senior advisor to the Minister of Interior while the United States has embedded a team of eight policing experts within the Ministry to carry out reforms at the operational level. Interior Ministry officials are considering a number of options to overhaul the institution and ensure that it is operated in accordance with international standards of good governance, including the establishment of a Civil Service Academy and the launch of in-service training. However, neither of these initiatives has begun due to funding difficulties. As of April 2004 the Ministry of Interior faced a budgetary funding gap of over \$200 million dollars.

National Security Directorate (NSD)

The NSD is one of the largest institutions in the country, consisting of 15,000-20,000 employees. It is rife with corruption and unrepresentative of the country's ethnic make-up. The U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the Government of Germany are currently spearheading reform efforts but the process has been characterized by a lack of transparency and coordination. The goal of the program is

to create a non-political, non-partisan, and accountable security service. Among the significant accomplishments made have been the establishment of a merit based appointment system and the promulgation of a charter that circumscribes the wide powers of arrest and detention that it previously held. Plans have been made to create an Intelligence Academy that will train 5,000 new officers within five years. Shortfalls in resources for logistics, communications and transportation have hindered efforts to professionalize the force.

Counter-Narcotics

The surging drug trade in Afghanistan represents a seminal obstacle to development, stability, and security. Producing 3,600 mt. of opium in 2003, Afghanistan has reclaimed its position as the world's foremost supplier of opiates, accounting for three quarters of world production. So pervasive is the opium trade in Afghanistan that 7 percent of the population is involved in production, accounting for \$2.3 billion in revenue, roughly 50 percent of Afghanistan's legal GDP. The implications of the drug trade for Afghanistan are far reaching: it has obstructed development as it draws increasing numbers of Afghans into the shadow economy; it has encouraged corruption in the government; it has sparked a sharp rise in drug addiction and its concomitant social ills; and it has funnelled resources to warlords and anti-government spoiler groups.

The United Kingdom accepted the unceremonious role as lead-donor nation for SSR and have repeatedly emphasized that any solution to Afghanistan's drug crisis would take more than a decade to reach its fruition. Such an approach has been reinforced with references to the successful anti-drug programs of Thailand and Pakistan both of which required more than a decade to make a substantial impact. Yet the exponential rise in Afghan production coupled with conspicuous early failures in British-supported programs has generated calls for more aggressive action.

Various different approaches have been forwarded on how to confront Afghanistan's drug problem. They differ on the actors they target—producers and farmers or producers and traders—and the strategies they employ—alternative crop programs, crop eradication, or interdiction. The first program introduced to combat the problem following the announcement of the Afghan government's ban cultivation on January

17, 2002, was a British sponsored poppy eradication program that provided monetary incentives for cooperation. The \$34 million program, which was swiftly discontinued, was an abject failure as poppy cultivation actually increased in the targeted areas. Despite this setback, a number of important achievements have been made including: the establishment of a Counter-Narcotics Directorate (CND) within the NSC to provide technical support and advice to relevant Ministries and to ensure the timely implementation of national drug control objectives; the adoption of a National Drug Control Strategy (NDCS) aimed at eliminating the production, consumption, and trafficking of illicit narcotics into, within, and from the country; the inauguration of a Counter-Narcotics Police of Afghanistan (CNPA) within the Ministry of Interior, to spearhead interdiction efforts; and the promulgation of a National Drug Law on 20 October 2003.

Disagreements on how best to advance the process, culminating in a scathing U.S. attack on British actions in April 2004, has fragmented donor support. Although the U.S.-led coalition has been reluctant to engage in counter-narcotics activities, the U.S. State Department has sponsored the formation of an Ministry of Interior-organized Central Eradication Force, with security and logistical support provided by the private security company, DynCorp (Bhatia et al, 2004, p. 18). In contrast, the British continue to support an Afghan Narcotics Force supported by its own special forces, while enhancing the capacity of the CND. The competing strategies and agenda's of donor states in relation to counter-narcotics have impeded progress and left many of the funding requests of the Afghan government unheeded.

Judicial Reform

The success of the security sector reform process is dependent upon the entrenchment of the rule of law in Afghanistan. It provides both the foundation upon which the country's security sector institutions can be rooted and a framework to guide and regulate their actions. Only with the institutionalisation of the rule of law can "the culture of impunity" which remains a pervasive in Afghanistan be removed. Judicial reform is the vehicle to implant the rule of law. Yet in spite of the importance of this enterprise it has received the least attention of all the SSR pillars.

The judicial reform process, under Italian supervision, was launched at the Bonn conference with the appointment of a judicial reform commission mandated to revitalize the country's legal system. Within four months the commission was dissolved due to irreconcilable differences among its members. The body was revived in November 2002, however, it appears set to collapse again. The trials and tribulations experienced by the judicial commissions are indicative of the failings of the entire process, which appears to be drifting rudderless.

The pillar can boast of a number of modest achievements over the past two years, including: the redrafting of legal codes covering a number of subjects; the ratification of an Interim Criminal Procedure Code; the completion of law collection; the establishment of a training programme for judicial personnel including judges, magistrates and defence counsellors; the inauguration of infrastructure rehabilitation activities; and the launch of administrative reforms. The accomplishments of an NGO, the International Development Law Organization (IDLO) are particularly noteworthy, as it has completed the training of 450 judges and prosecutors over the past 18 months (Bhatia et. al, 2004, p. 18). The work of the IDLO addresses what is arguably the most profound challenge facing the process, capacity. An acute lack of qualified judges, prosecutors, defence counsellors, legal clerks etc... has paralysed the process, leaving a legal vacuum across the country. A number of other factors have also limited progress including insufficient resources—the average salary for a judge is \$36 per month (Bhatia et. al, 2004, p. 18); insecurity; insufficient coordination between the permanent Afghan judicial institutions, the Supreme Court, the Attorney General, and the Ministry of Justice; a lack of adequate correctional facilities; the limited availability of legislation, legal texts, and jurisprudence collections; and poor infrastructure.

Judicial reform is inextricably connected to the other four pillars of the process. Accordingly, the lack of progress in judicial reform has had far reaching ramifications across the SSR process. There is no shortage of anecdotal evidence demonstrating the impact of the current legal vacuum across the country. Such accounts follow a familiar pattern: a criminal, whether it is a drug smuggler or bandit, is arrested by the authorities, only to be released a day later due to the local district's lack of capacity to try him. Such phenomenon has inevitably shaken local trust in government institutions and the rule of law. Without a substantial increase in investment in judicial

reform and the formation of a concerted plan to jumpstart the process, the entire SSR process will continue to stall.

Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration of Ex-combatants (DDR)

Afghanistan's DDR program is more than just a disarmament campaign or a targeted job-creation program. The overarching objective of the program is to dismantle active military formations in order to foster an enabling environment for reconstruction. It is a means to sever internal dependency and patronage relationships and facilitate the transition from a war to peace economy, thereby undermining the "the nexus of insecurity and the criminalized economy" (Rubin, 2004, pp. 165-70). The Afghan New Beginnings Programme (ANBP), introduced in February 2003 at a donor's conference in Tokyo, was created to assist line Ministries to advance DDR. Established under the auspices of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), with support from Japan, the lead donor for DDR, the ANBP set the following objective:

To decommission formations and units up to a total of 100,000 officers and soldiers and in the process to collect, store and deactivate weapons currently in their possession in order to be able to reconstruct the Afghan National Army (ANA) and return those not required to civilian life (Sedra, 2004b, p. 3).

A demobilization and reintegration program targeting children has also been established by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). The UN agency has determined that there are 8,000 child soldiers that require special demobilization and reintegration assistance in Afghanistan. In light of Afghanistan's recent history of foreign intervention and internecine strife, during which it became a sanctuary for terrorists and mercenaries and a dumping ground for arms, the two DDR initiatives have set an ambitious goal, to complete the demilitarisation of the country in three years.

The pilot phase of the \$167 million ANBP began on 24 October 2003 in Kunduz. Initially slated to begin on 22 June 2003, the program was delayed on several occasions due to the reluctance of the Ministry of Defence to submit to core structural

reforms. As of June 2004 the pilot phase had been completed and the main phase had begun in Kabul, Kunduz, Gardez, and Kandahar. According to ANBP officials, 6,230 combatants had been demobilized and 4,945 weapons collected during the pilot phase. These figures confer the impression that the pilot phase was an unmitigated success; however, they belie the real picture that emerged, one characterized by delays, disorganization, and significant structural problems related to the program's design. In the first two pilot sites, the program failed to decommission a single unit and was heavily influenced by local commanders determined to maintain the integrity of their forces. Those disarmed were largely irregular militiamen that had effectively demobilized after the fall of the Taliban regime and the bulk of the weapons submitted were of very low quality.

In March 2004 the Afghan government declared that it would complete the disarmament of 40% of the country's militia forces by the country's first elections scheduled for September 2004. It appears that meeting this goal will be difficult, if not impossible. A number of factors have culminated to create an environment that is not conducive for DDR: insecurity; the lack of a consensus among key commanders; the lack of support of the Ministry of Defence; and a lack of labour intensive employment. Afghanistan features one of the few cases DDR implementation in which the local Ministry of Defence has maintained a hostile position towards the process. While the Ministry of Defence has publicly endorsed the ANBP, it has taken a number of covert steps to unravel it. For example, in early 2004, the Ministry of Defence instructed local militia commanders in a number of districts to recruit new forces, a clear violation of its agreement to submit fully to the DDR process. The determination of the U.S.-led Coalition to use Afghan proxies under the auspices of Operation Enduring Freedom, troops that would otherwise be entered into the ANBP, has had a similarly corrosive effect on the program. There are even reports that the Coalition has recruited troops recently demobilized soldiers in the midst of receiving reintegration assistance.

The initial results of the pilot phase of the ANBP show that the program's design is at variance with the prevailing conditions on the ground and does not adequately address the main challenges to DDR implementation that exist. The lack of mechanisms to entice and co-opt commanders to submit to the program coupled with its overemphasis on active AMF soldiers, ignoring irregular tribal forces; exemplify

the program's inherent limitations. The ANA is taking steps to rectify these deficiencies, notably the establishment of scheme to profile and devise targeted incentive packages for commanders. It is important that further steps are taken to reorient the program for its failure would have far-reaching implications for the ongoing political process.

Security Sector Governance

As alluded to in the previous section, efforts to train and professionalise Afghanistan's security forces have been prioritised above the task of subordinating these institutions to civil authority and situating them within the law. Pressures imposed upon the process to address insecurity in the country have generated dangerous compromises on the basic principles of good governance that underpin the process. SSR in Afghanistan can be accurately described as an assembly line to produce professional security forces, with little consideration of how they will be governed in the new political order. The following section will offer an analysis of the organizational structure of the Afghan security sector and the political dynamics that shape it.

Constitutional Framework

According to the Afghan constitution, adopted in early 2004 following months of rancorous debate and politicking, the Afghan president is the Command-in Chief of the Armed Forces and is responsible for the "appointment, retirement and acceptance of resignation and dismissal of judges, officers of the armed forces, police, national security, and high-ranking officials in accordance with the law" (Constitution of Afghanistan, Ch. 3, Art 5). The Presidency represents, is the focal point for security policy in the country. This does not preclude an important role for the National Assembly, consisting of two houses: the *Wolesi Jirga* (the House of People) and *Meshrano Jirga* (House of Elders). It plays a vital oversight role for "any commission of both Houses of the National Assembly can question each of the Ministers about specific topics" (Constitution of Afghanistan, Ch. 5, Art 13). The *Wolsei Jirga* also has the authority, if it receives the support of one third of the chamber, to directly question any member of the government. If the answers it receives are unsatisfactory, it could enter a no-confidence in the government.

Although the constitution provides robust oversight over executive decisions it has yet to be put into practice. The current Afghan Transitional Administration (ATA) was given its mandate by an emergency *Loya Jirga*. Country-wide Presidential and legislative elections are scheduled for September 2004, but due to logistical problems regarding voter registration and worsening security conditions it is unclear whether they will be held at that time.

The judicial branch of the Afghan government, comprising the Supreme Court (*Stera Mahkama*), High Courts, and Appeal Courts, is an independent organ. The court is mandated to “attend to all lawsuits in which real individuals or incorporeal including the state stand before it as plaintiff or defendant and in its presence is expressed in accord with provisions of the law” (Constitution of Afghanistan, Ch. 7, Art 5). The President must approve all appointments to the Supreme Court, and the National Assembly must approve the budget of the body. In the event of malfeasance on the part of a member of the judiciary, the National Assembly, with a two thirds majority, can dismiss the accused and refer the individual to a special court.

Civil Management of the Security Sector

Regardless of the nature and extent of the safeguards and oversight mechanisms encapsulated in the recently promulgated constitution, the degree of civilian control currently exercised over Afghanistan’s security forces is highly circumscribed. The Afghan Militia Force (AMF), the assemblage of militias affiliated to the Northern Alliance mandated to provide a security buffer in the transition period before the ANA could be deployed, is largely under the control of local military commanders and warlords across the country. The same can be said of the police in many areas. Local police chiefs are often appointed by local commanders rather than the Interior Ministry, thus their loyalty to the central government is tenuous.

The Ministry of Defence has showed a high degree of independence, primarily due to the military assets at its disposal. Minister Fahim has leveraged his military power in government to secure concessions from the President. Although the interior ministry is led by a reformist Minister, he has been blocked from imposing drastic reforms due to the tremendous power exerted by mid level figures.

The budgets of the principal security ministries have presented an effective mechanism to rein them in intransigent ministers and steer them towards reform. The Finance Ministry, headed by Ashraf Ghani, has asserted its control over the disbursement of all government funds as well as international assistance allocated to the principal trust funds. By demanding that the Ministry of Defence clearly articulate its spending plans as a prerequisite for the release of budgetary allotments, it has positioned itself as an important check on the activities of the Ministry of Defence. For example, the Finance Ministry has blocked the disbursement of funds earmarked for AMF salaries to the Ministry of Defence until it could provide detailed payroll lists. Similar actions have been taken in regard to the Ministry of Interior where disbursements from the LOTFA have been delayed until properly accountability structures were put in place. The Finance Ministry has utilized its command over the economic levers of the government to counter the power of the Ministry of Defence derived from its command of military force. The combative relationship that has emerged between the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Finance is not sustainable in the long-term, particularly if the security situation becomes more tenuous.

In addition to the oversight role provided by the National Assembly, it is important that the capacity of government institutions and civil society organizations are developed to fill this role. While few steps have been taken to enhance independent monitoring capacity of the security sector, within the government a National Security Council has been formed for this purpose.

The National Security Council (NSC)

The Afghan National Security Council was established by presidential decree to provide the President advice on security related issues; to develop and coordinate Afghan security policy, acting as a bridge between the line security Ministries and the executive branch of government; and to oversee the implementation of security policy on behalf of the executive. It was intended to act as a coordinating umbrella for the security sector reform process, harmonizing the competing agenda's of donors and Afghan stakeholders and serving as a focal point for government policy and strategy.

The NSC can also be viewed as a bulwark for good governance within the security sector as it is responsible for oversight of policy implementation by the line Ministries and security forces. It is mandated to monitor and analyse the implementation of executive orders and cabinet decisions to ensure the integrity of the chain of command. Despite the urgent need for such a body, few of the principal stakeholders in the SSR process have accepted its authority. It has been sidelined on many of the principal issues and has yet to fully establish its legitimacy. By the summer of 2004, this situation had begun to change due to shifting donor policy and pressure from President Karzai, but has yet to fully realize its mandate.

The imperative of training and equipping Afghan security forces in as short a period as possible has eclipsed efforts to ensure that the system conforms to international standards of good governance and democratic accountability. It seemingly has ignored the reality that security forces not subjected to adequately rigorous controls and oversight can become a source of insecurity rather than a solution to it.

Threats to the Process

Afghanistan's SSR process is beset by threats. Ranging from insecurity to ethnic tension these challenges have severely circumscribed the achievements of the process and appear capable of undermining it completely

Insecurity

Security sector reform cannot be implemented in a security vacuum. It is a long-term process that requires a minimum level of security and stability to function. While the country enjoys a moderate degree of political stability within Kabul, primarily due to the extensive international civilian and troop presence, the remainder of the country remains plagued by political uncertainty and violence. Insecurity has grown steadily across the country since the collapse of the Taliban regime, obstructing development and reconstruction efforts and preventing the central government from asserting its authority in many areas. Fuelling this wave of insecurity has been a rejuvenated criminalized economy, dominated by the burgeoning opium trade. Demonstrating the tenuous nature of the security situation, in June 2004 14 international staff in Afghanistan were killed, equalling the total of internationals killed in all of 2003

(Bhatia et al., 2003, p.2). In mid-June 2004, ISAF's acting public information chief stated: "The security situation is far from being stable. It is deteriorating" (IRIN, 16 June 2004). A number of factors have contributed to the upsurge of insecurity, including:

Anti-Government Spoiler Groups

Afghanistan's spoiler groups, which include remnants of the Taliban; former Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's *Hizb-i Islami* faction²; and *al-Qaeda*, are determined to undermine the authority of the new central government and bring about the withdrawal of the international community, particularly U.S.-led coalition forces. The Taliban, which appears to be operating at the head of a loose alliance comprising the three groups, is not in a position to unilaterally overthrow the central government. The Taliban movement "has evolved into a decentralized guerrilla group that has portrayed itself as a vehicle for Pashtun nationalism" (Sedra, 2004d, p. 3). At a Senate Hearing in Washington in late February 2004, Vice Admiral Lowell Jacoby, the head of the U.S. Defence Intelligence Agency, claimed that attacks had reached "their highest levels since the collapse of the Taliban government" (quoted in Rubin, 2004, p. 4). Operating primarily in the southeast, spoiler groups have gradually adjusted their tactics from targeting coalition forces to focusing on 'soft targets', including aid workers and government employees. The new strategy has borne fruit, as the UN and major international organizations, including the International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC), have scaled back their operations in the south and east, depriving up to one third of the country of development assistance. Growing disillusionment among this large constituency, primarily of Pashtun descent, has boosted support for the insurgency.

Warlordism

After the fall of the Taliban regime, regional military commanders across Afghanistan proceeded to establish mini-fiefdoms within their spheres of influence. In many respects, this represented a return to the *status-quo ante* of 1994, just prior to the

² On 2 May 2004, a delegation of 10 senior members of *Hizb-i Islami*, claiming to represent the group's executive council, pledged their support to the Karzai government and the ongoing political process. The announcement was made after several months of negotiations with government officials. However, the delegation did not represent the leader of the organization, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, who, with the support of a hardcore group of followers, continues to oppose the government.

Taliban's rise to power. This group of predatory elites operates with impunity in the areas under their control, preventing the government from establishing its authority. They collect taxes and customs duties; maintain their own private armies; and exploit the criminalized economy. Their power is rooted in the military assets at their disposal; the clientelistic personalized networks that they maintain; and, to a lesser extent, support from external actors. These networks are not limited to the periphery but extend deep into the government, giving them a *de facto* veto over the state building process. Inevitably, conflicts between warlords, over territory and resources have erupted at various flashpoints around the country, resulting in hundreds of casualties and an inhospitable environment for development. Some of the leaders of the security sector reform process, most notably the Minister of Defence, fall into this category. Minister Fahim maintains his own private army, sits at the head of a vast criminal network generating millions of dollars in revenue, and openly obstructs reform efforts targeting his support base.

Narcotics Trade & the 'Shadow Economy'

Afghanistan's criminalized or 'shadow economy', a hub for criminal networks stretching from Russia to the Gulf States, is one of the principal engines of insecurity in Afghanistan. It comprises a range of illegitimate economic activities including the smuggling of consumer goods and trafficking in gems, timber, archaeological artefacts, and even humans. However, it is the production and trafficking of opium that forms its largest and most profitable element. In 2002, Afghanistan returned to its position as the foremost supplier of opiates to the world market, accounting for approximately 75 percent of world production. Most indicators show that the problem will only worsen in the years ahead. A survey of farmers intentions conducted by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in late 2003, found that 69 percent of farmers surveyed intend to increase poppy cultivation in 2004 and more than 30 percent of farmers intend to double production (UNODC, 2003b, p. 10). Perhaps one of the most dangerous consequences of the trade is the vast amount of resources that it channels to terrorists, spoiler groups and warlords. The French Defence Minister, Michele Alliot-Marie, has declared that "Drugs are now the principal source of funding for Osama bin Laden's *al-Qaeda* network" (UPI, 16 January 2004), and according to one report the Taliban received \$150 million in revenue from the trade in 2003 (Bhatia et al., 2004, 8). If the growth of this lucrative

trade is not forestalled, the Taliban, *al-Qaeda* and other anti-government groups, will be difficult to contain.

Coordination

Inadequate coordination is a common dilemma afflicting SSR processes. The failure of donors in Afghanistan to achieve a consensus on the objectives and strategies of the program has obstructed efforts to harmonize its five pillars. Coordination deficits have been experienced at various levels: donor-donor; donor-government; intra-government; and inter-agency.

Donor-Donor

At the donor-donor level, the nature of Afghanistan's multi-sectoral donor support scheme has complicated coordination efforts. It has fragmented reform efforts and triggered turf wars. For example, although relations between the German and U.S. police reform programs are cordial, levels of collaboration and joint planning is surprisingly low. The two policing programs have established separate schemes to reform and reorganize the Ministry of Interior that feature a large degree of duplication. Such situations are common across the SSR agenda.

Donor-Government

Communication and coordination between donor agencies and the relevant Ministries of the Afghan government could be characterized as inconsistent and of generally poor quality. In the area of military reform, the process to train the ANA has been pursued independently of the Afghan Ministry of Defence. The U.S. forms policy for the fledgling ANA, covers its capital and recurrent expenditures, and utilizes fledgling ANA units to support Coalition military operations in the southeast. The Afghan Ministry of Defence has little influence over the ANA, seen in many quarters as a U.S. proxy militia. There are clear reasons why the Ministry of Defence has been sidelined in the process, notably that it has obstructed the ANA training process on numerous occasions. Nevertheless, it highlights both the lack of Afghan ownership of the process and the absence of civilian control over the newly created security forces.

Intra-Governmental

The government is riven with internal divisions both within and between Ministries and government agencies. Exemplifying the problem of intra-governmental coordination is the justice sector. The three principal Afghan justice institutions, the Supreme Court, the Attorney General, and the Ministry of Justice are highly factionalised and deeply divided. The failure of these Ministries to develop unity of effort and purpose has paralysed the judicial reform process.

Inter-Agency

Coordination problems are not limited to donor states and the Afghan government but have also taken place at the sub-national, agency and program level. A superb example emanates from the DDR process. Two programs have been created to advance the demilitarisation of Afghan ex-combatants, the ANBP, which targets adult ex-combatants, and UNICEF's child soldiers program, which targets underage combatants. In spite of the two programs' shared objectives, they are operated independently with separate sources of funding. There is little communication, let alone collaboration, between the programs, despite the fact that there is a significant degree of overlap in their administrative structures. It is difficult to discern a rational reason for the separation. Methodological differences between the planners of the two programs appear to have provoked the split.

Harmonizing the SSR agenda requires the development of indigenous coordination capacity. In the Afghan context, the National Security Council (NSC) is mandated to fill this role. However, as discussed earlier, it has encountered significant difficulties in asserting its authority, due to intra-governmental rivalries and the reluctance of certain donors to recognize its authority. The NSC is taking steps to rectify this situation, including: the compilation of a National Threat Assessment; the formulation of a comprehensive National Security Policy Framework; and the creation of a high level SSR steering group, assembling all of the relevant stakeholders.

Donor Funding

For SSR to be successful, long-term and durable sources of financial support are required. The task of mobilizing resources for a SSR process while it is underway can prove to be problematic. Afghanistan is one of the most impoverished countries in the world, ranking only ahead of Sierra Leone in the UNDP Human Development

Index. It simply does not have the domestic resource generating capacity to fund complex security sector reform of the scale required in Afghanistan. In 2002/03, a total of \$83 million in domestic revenue was generated against an ordinary budget of \$350 million (Sedra & Middlebrook, 2004c, p.4). The burden of funding the process over the next 5-7 years will inevitably fall on the shoulders of the international community. A report presented by the Afghan government at a Donor Conference in Berlin on 20 March - 1 April 2004, offered a detailed plan for the reconstruction of Afghanistan's security sector over the next seven years. According to the report, titled *Securing Afghanistan's Future: Accomplishments and the Strategic Path Forward*, \$2.6 billion will be needed to implement the process over this time period (see Table 1 for funding breakdown). It is imperative that the donor community meet this funding request.

Table 1.1: Overall Security Sector Needs (2004-2007)

SUB-SECTOR	2004-2006 (IN MILLIONS OF US\$)	2007-2010 (IN MILLIONS OF US\$)
NATIONAL POLICE AND LAW ENFORCEMENT	504	140
COUNTER NARCOTICS	98	66
NATIONAL ARMY	754	289
JUSTICE	73	20
DISARMAMENT, DEMOBILIZATION, AND REINTEGRATION OF EX- COMBATANTS (DDR)	117	100
MINE ACTION	224	196
TOTAL	1770	811

*Source: ITSA, 2004, p. 83.

Regional Security Framework

External interference, particularly from regional states, has perennially been a major cause of instability in Afghanistan. Afghanistan's important geopolitical position—at the crossroads between continents and a hub in formal and informal trading routes stretching from the Persian Gulf to Russia—has ensured the continuation of regional influence in Afghanistan's internal affairs. This interference has been manifested in various forms, ranging from direct military intervention to the support of local proxies, the most common type found today. The most blatant offenders in this regard are Russia, Iran, and Pakistan. Russia has provided economic and military aid to the Panjsheri faction and its allies; Iran has strong economic, political and military ties with Ismail Khan, a powerful warlord in western Afghanistan; and elements of the Pakistani military and intelligence apparatus have allegedly provided refuge and support to their former client, the Taliban, turning a blind eye to their cross-border guerrilla attacks on Coalition and ATA targets from Pakistani territory. Other states including Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Turkey and India are also guilty of meddling in Afghan domestic affairs, but on a lesser scale. Shared ethnic, religious, and ideological ties are the most important criterion in the formation of patron-client relationships. It provides a convenient pretext for patron states to funnel support to their proxies. Utilizing this conduit external states have exploited ethnic divisions in Afghanistan for their own ends, exacerbating already deep and volatile cleavages.

Although most states with a history of intervention in Afghanistan have supported the U.S.-led Operation Enduring Freedom and the subsequent state-building effort, most continue to provide covert support for various warlords, an effort to hedge their bets in the event of a U.S. withdrawal from the region. To create an environment conducive for SSR, external interference in Afghanistan must be halted. A significant step towards achieving this goal was achieved with the signing of the Kabul Declaration on Good-neighbourly Relations, a pledge of non-interference by Afghanistan's immediate neighbours: Pakistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, China and Iran, on 22 December 2002. The United States and the international community must build on this achievement by guaranteeing Afghanistan's external security. Some observers have even suggested that Afghanistan be declared a neutral state, like Austria or Switzerland.

Ethnic Division

Overcoming Afghanistan's deep ethnic, religious and political cleavages is one of the most profound challenges facing the reconstruction process. Yet, the Bonn Agreement which launched the process, paradoxically served to reinforce such divisions. It institutionalised inequality; ethnicized the government; and failed to adequately address security sector reform, missing a seminal opportunity to legitimise the process. By solidifying Pansheri Tajik control of the principal security institutions, it created a fundamental imbalance in the government that has proven difficult to redress. Correcting this mistake is a key to imbuing the security sector with public legitimacy. Many of the decisions made by the security organs are based more on factional than national interests. The perceptions of Ministry's and government agencies are often moulded on the basis of their factional affiliations. For instance, the Ministry of Defence is perceived to be Tajik dominated while the National Security Council is viewed as a Pashtun-controlled body.

Contradictory in U.S. Policy

U.S. strategy in Afghanistan has two distinct dimensions: the war against the Taliban and other spoiler groups in the southeast of the country and the support of President Hamid Karzai's regime and the concomitant state building process in Kabul. Unfortunately, these two arms of U.S. policy have worked at cross purposes, generating friction between the U.S. agencies that oversee them. For instance, the U.S. military, under the auspices of Operation Enduring Freedom, has allied itself with several regional powerbrokers, providing them with money in return for the use of their militias in anti-Taliban operations—individual commanders receive up to \$10,000 per month in cash grants from the U.S. The relatively small number of U.S. troops deployed in this theatre of operations has prompted the Pentagon to rely heavily on local forces, strengthening and emboldening some of the very warlords the central government is endeavouring to bring to heel. This adverse situation is representative of the broader ambivalence of U.S. policy towards Afghanistan. As the most important donor in Afghanistan, the U.S. must reconcile its divergent approach to the country and assume a greater leadership role over the security sector reform process.

Recommendations

To overcome the obstacles outlined in the previous section a number of steps must be taken to reformulate and reinvigorate the process. The following is a list of essential measures:

Enhance Coordination and Ownership

The SSR process must be owned, directed, and coordinated by the Afghan government. Afghanistan surely faces an acute capacity deficit, yet it has successfully established a policy development and coordinating body, the National Security Council, that can oversee reform, and has put forward a competent strategic framework, the Securing Afghanistan's Future (SAF) Report that charts a course for the process. Both the NSC and the SAF are fully Afghan owned and should be endorsed by the international community. Only by doing so can the unity of effort and purpose required for the process to succeed be achieved.

The current coordination deficits afflicting the program can be resolved by devolving increased authority to the National Security Council and placing more emphasis on the Consultative Group framework. The Consultative Groups (CGs) were established to support ministries in their preparation of the National Development Budget. There are 16 CGs, each corresponding to one of the national budget programs in the budget. The groups are chaired by the responsible Ministry and comprise all other relevant donor agencies and government stakeholders. The competition, miscommunication, and overlap that characterize the process can be resolved by dedicating more attention and resources to coordination mechanisms.

International Security Assistance

It is vital that the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) fulfill its pledges of limited countrywide expansion under the auspices of the PRT framework. NATO has pledged to do so through the establishment of eight additional Provisional Reconstruction Teams (PRT), bringing the total to 21 throughout Afghanistan. However, four months after NATO's governing council authorized expansion, member states have yet to commit the requisite troops. Although NATO Secretary

General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer has repeatedly referred to Afghanistan as the alliance's 'top priority', he has been unable to convince its reluctant member states to commit the needed resources (AP, 12 February 2004). With the security situation in Afghanistan clearly worsening the need for NATO expansion, both to demonstrate international resolve and provide a security buffer, is crucial.

Resources

If the SSR process is to be successful it must be properly resourced. Core issues such as the payment of salaries and the purchase of equipment continue to pose problems and must be resolved through increased donor support. Of course, chronic corruption within the security ministries has made donors reluctant to deliver funds directly to the government. Internationally administered trust funds such as LOTFA provide a rational solution to this dilemma. Delivering funds in trust allows international oversight over their distribution without depriving the Afghans of control over them.

Regional Security Guarantee

It is important that mechanisms be put in place to guarantee the central principle of the Afghan Good Neighbourly Relations Agreement, namely the inviolability of Afghan sovereignty. Until neighbouring and regional states respect the country's territorial integrity, domestic security and stability will remain a mirage. Whether this is achieved through external security guarantees or the declaration of neutrality is immaterial.

Renewed Emphasis on Judicial Reform

There is a broad consensus among those analysing Afghanistan's SSR process that the judicial reform component has received grossly inadequate attention and support. The critical nature of this pillar, as a vehicle to entrench the rule of law in Afghan society, necessitates an urgent infusion of resources to jumpstart it. This will require the support of additional donor states, notably the United States, along with the adoption of a more direct role from the United Nations. It is clear that the process has been devoid of a succinct overarching strategy. The international donor community must assist the permanent Afghan legal institutions to design and implement this

strategic approach. Of course the success of the endeavour is dependent on the willingness of the permanent Afghan judicial institutions to cooperate constructively and work towards a common goal.

Prioritise Administrative Reform

The Afghan security sector reform process has been fixated on training and professionalising security forces to reach the critical mass necessary to meet the country's burgeoning security requirements. This has diverted attention and resources from efforts to impose oversight structures and measures of accountability on the security forces. In essence, it has robbed the process of its *raison d'être*, to ensure that security forces are placed firmly under civilian control and prevented from abusing their authority. Now that the training process is roughly on track for the security forces, the pendulum should shift to advancing administrative reforms and building the oversight capacity of the government and civil society. This translates into increased support for the Afghan National Security Council and augmented international efforts to nurture Afghan civil society through grants and training.

Conclusion

SSR is the key to the success of Afghanistan's state-building experiment. Building the capacity of the Afghan security sector so it can assume its rightful place as the guarantor of the country's security is important not just because it will allow the government to achieve a central prerequisite for statehood, a monopoly over the use of force, but also because it offers on an "exit-strategy" for international military forces. Succeeding in this endeavour requires not only training and equipment for Afghanistan's security forces, but the installation of safeguards to ensure that the sector is managed by the civilian democratic authorities and conforms to international standards of human rights. State security forces are still viewed with fear by large segments of the population, a legacy of the 23 year civil war in which security forces were the perpetrators of numerous egregious crimes against the Afghan people.

In spite of the pivotal nature of the Afghan SSR process, the results it has achieved in the two years that have elapsed since its inauguration have been limited. This can be attributed to several factors: First, the conditions prevalent in Afghanistan are simply not conducive for reform. The process was not designed to be advanced in

the face of a low-intensity war. It presupposes a minimum level of security in the country that is presently absent. Second, the international community's "minimalist" approach to the provision of support for the program, exemplified by the limited deployment of peacekeepers and crippling shortfalls in funds, has imposed a heavy burden on the process. Finally the ambivalence of the U.S. approach to Afghanistan has complicated the process. Although the U.S.-led coalition has taken steps to reconcile the divergent aims of U.S. policy, deep contradictions remain.

The imperative to address growing insecurity in the absence of significant international security presence coalesced attention around the training and professionalisation of security forces. This has triggered damaging concessions on some of the core principles of good governance that give the process meaning. Accordingly the development of governmental and civil service oversight capacity as well as efforts to entrench the rule of law have received scant attention and support. While this manipulation of the process may seem justifiable in the short-term as an emergency measure, its long-term ramifications will be disastrous as it may permit the security sector to descend into previous corruptive and abusive patterns that will only exacerbate insecurity and instability and undermine the legitimacy of the government.

The dilemma facing the process illustrates the unsuitability of the conventional SSR model, so rigidly adhered to in policy making circles, for complex post-conflict situations like Afghanistan. The success of the model is dependent on an array of conditions including absent in the Afghan context and most other post-conflict environments for that matter. If the Afghan case has shown anything, it is that a reappraisal of the utility of the conventional SSR model in post conflict settings is required. There is an intellectual inertia obstructing innovation in SSR program design in such settings that must be overcome.

Afghanistan's SSR process is not without important achievements, hence there is room for optimism. However, as the process is currently structured it will be hard pressed to meet its core objectives. To set the process on track it the balance between efforts to create efficient and effective security forces and efforts to situate those forces within a framework of law must be struck. It is also essential that donors reaffirm their commitments to the process through the provision of military, economic

and political resources, and that Afghan actors achieve a wide-ranging domestic consensus on the goals and structures of the program and express a openness to reform. Without such steps Afghanistan may miss the historic window for opportunity and renewal to which it currently faces. Missing that chance would be a tragedy not just for Afghanistan but for the entire international community.

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Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF)

Established in October 2000 on the initiative of the Swiss government, the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) encourages and supports States and non-State governed institutions in their efforts to strengthen democratic and civilian control of armed and security forces, and promotes security sector reform conforming to democratic standards.

The Centre collects information and undertakes research in order to identify problems, to gather experience from lessons learned, and to propose best practices in the field of democratic governance of the security sector. The Centre provides its expertise and support, through practical work programmes on the ground, to all interested parties, in particular governments, parliaments, military authorities, international organisations, non-governmental organisations, and academic circles.

Detailed information on DCAF can be found at www.dcaf.ch

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