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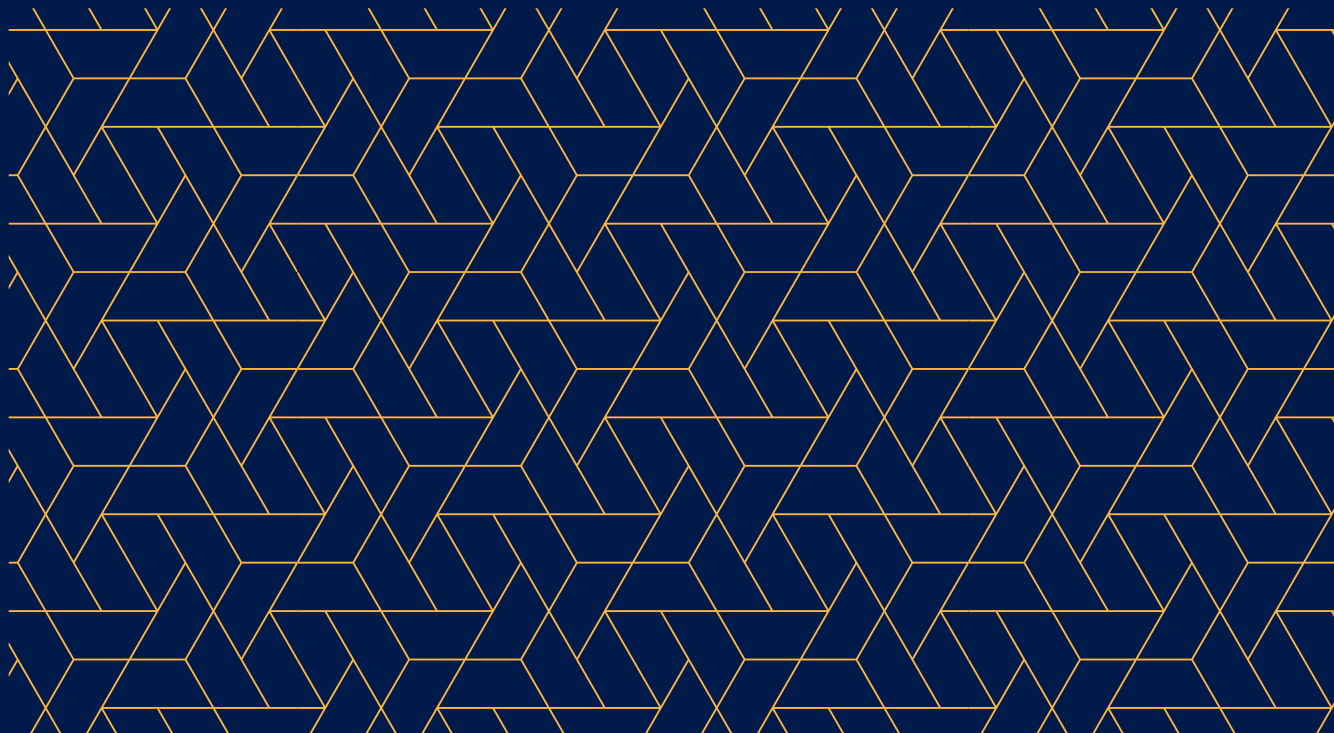
DEPARTMENT OF PEACE OPERATIONS — OROLSI

Input to the Review of the UN Defence Sector Reform Policy

Insights from a Mapping of Security Council Mandates and Reports of the Secretary-General

(2006–2016)

POLICY PAPER

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The role of security sector reform (SSR) in sustaining peace and preventing conflict is widely recognized. The joint United Nations–World Bank report, *Pathways for Peace*, notes that issues of exclusion, corruption, and lack of transparency in a security sector can contribute to deep-seated grievances and the (re-)occurrence of conflict.[1] Reforms of security sectors must be guided by in-depth political analysis and should address those governance gaps that pose the highest risk to peace, stability, and development. This approach should also be applied in reforms to the defence sector, a key component of the security sector that is at the heart of good governance and rule of law.[2]

Background

2. Under its broad mandate to support peace and security, the United Nations (UN) has been engaged for decades in providing support to nationally-led SSR processes – including defence sector reform (DSR) – at the request of Member States or with a mandate from the Security Council. In the first report of the UN Secretary-General on SSR (2008), UN support in this field was acknowledged as largely an ad hoc undertaking, despite the organization's long-standing engagement.[3] The report highlighted the absence of system-wide principles and standards guiding UN SSR support to national actors, as well as constraints on the resources required to deliver effectively on mandates. Over the past ten years, the UN has gained significant experience in implementing SSR/DSR mandates and has progressively developed policy and guidance materials on SSR. Still, much remains to be achieved. In particular, and as recognized by the UN Security Council, further efforts are needed to ensure that support to reforms of individual security sector components are balanced with sector-wide initiatives addressing strategic governance, management, and oversight aspects.[4]

3. Since the 2008 report of the Secretary-General on SSR, DSR mandates have increased. DSR tasks are also regularly undertaken under the umbrella of broader SSR mandates.[5] Both the Security Council and the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations have called for UN support to DSR to be anchored in the framework of SSR.[6] To that end, the UN adopted its first-ever Defence Sector Reform Policy in 2011. It sets out the foundations for UN support in this area, underpinned by many of the basic principles of SSR support.[7]

Objective

4. The UN Department of Peace Operations (DPO) commissioned DCAF, the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance, to undertake a desk-based mapping of Security Council mandates on DSR and to analyse the implementation of those mandates based on a review of regular country-specific reports of the Secretary-General.[8] This mapping is part of the formal review process of the UN DSR Policy, which DPO is leading in coordination with the UN Inter-Agency SSR Task Force. This broader DSR Policy review has two objectives: first, to identify and articulate lessons learned from the implementation of the DSR Policy; and second, to identify gaps in implementation of the Policy and inform policy updates and the development of additional guidance to address shortcomings.[9]

5. Security Council mandates play an important role in determining the focus, scope, and strategic direction of DSR support in UN operations. Therefore, this mapping focused on better understanding the evolution and current practice of the Security Council with regards to DSR mandate articulation. The study also reviewed corresponding reports of the Secretary-General to analyse the extent to which reporting on mandate implementation has been reflective of the underlying rationale of UN engagement in DSR as expressed in the 2011 DSR Policy. Reports of the Secretary-General are also a key political engagement tool among the Security Council, the Secretariat, and host nations. Security Council resolution 2151 requested that the Secretary-General include updates on progress related to SSR mandates, to enable the Security Council to fulfil its oversight role. Therefore, the study also sought to reflect on how this tool has been used and puts forth some recommendations for improving reporting practices by the UN Secretariat.

6. The UN DSR Policy acknowledges that DSR is inherently political,[10] even when it may appear technical in nature. While many actors engage in the technical aspects of DSR support, the UN is well positioned to support the development and transformation of defence sector governance, utilizing the good offices function of the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General (SRSGs) and building on normative frameworks endorsed by UN Member States. Recognizing that there is often a fine line between technical and political DSR support, this report has strived to highlight those elements of DSR that focus on defence sector governance deficits and that require political engagement by the UN to build national commitment around challenging elements of the reform process, whether this be through good offices, mediation, or coordination.

Scope

7. This mapping and analysis of relevant mandates and reports of the Secretary-General spans a ten-year period (2006–2016),[11] encompassing a total of **155 UN Security Council resolutions and 369 reports of the UN Secretary-General** pertaining to current and past operations. The research was based on a comprehensive desk review and was complemented by consultations with SSR practitioners from UN headquarters and the field.[12] While this methodology presented some limitations, notably its reliance on quantitative data[13] that does not account for important contextual considerations, the study nevertheless provides an important data-based snapshot of the state of play when it comes to (a) the type and scope of Security Council mandates on DSR, (b) the type of DSR engagement reported on by the Secretary-General, and (c) trends and insights regarding mandating and reporting practices.[14]

8. To account for possible differences in DSR mandates for peacekeeping operations (PKOs) and those for special political missions (SPMs), they were examined separately in this mapping. In the case of **PKOs**, the following operations were considered: the UN Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), the UN Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), the UN Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS), the UN–African Union Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African

Republic (MINUSCA), the UN Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), and the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO).[15]

9. In the case of **SPMs,** the following missions were considered: the UN Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), the UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), the UN Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI), the UN Office for West Africa (UNOWA), the UN Office in Burundi (BNUB), the UN Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS), the UN Integrated Office in Sierra Leone (UNIOSIL), the UN Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL), the UN Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL), and the UN Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic (BINUCA).

Substantive Focus and Methodology

10. This study examined key elements of the UN approach to DSR support, as outlined in the DSR Policy, and focused on the extent to which Security Council mandates and reports of the Secretary-General, respectively, pointed towards (a) political and/or technical UN engagement; (b) UN support at the tactical, operational, or strategic levels; (c) the range of UN DSR engagement with national actors; and (d) the scope of DSR support as reflected in categories of core tasks outlined in the Policy.

11. By engaging in DSR support, the UN aims to accompany the transformation of defence institutions and governance structures from being seen as potential sources of graft and violence against civilians, into respected providers of human security and enablers of stability and development. For this support to be transformative and in line with relevant provisions of the DSR Policy, this study assumes that UN DSR support needs to be comprehensive in nature. The DSR Policy notes that "comprehensive DSR processes are generally lengthy with a variety of resources involved", and require a "multilevel and multidirectional approach".[16] UN support to DSR was therefore only considered **comprehensive** in this study if it addressed a **variety of categories of DSR tasks and contained strong elements of political engagement along with elements of technical support at the strategic and operational levels**.[17] Support of a predominantly tactical nature, with some elements of operational support, was not considered comprehensive.

(i) Political and/or technical UN DSR engagement

12. The DSR Policy notes that DSR is often both a complex **political process as well as a technical endeavour,** which requires balancing technical and political engagement.[18] Understanding the political dimension of DSR is necessary to avoid further entrenching existing deficiencies in the security sector that may be a root cause of inequality, exclusion, discrimination, and insecurity. However, the Policy does not provide guidance on how to address the political aspects of DSR support, nor what constitutes such support.

13. For the purpose of this study and building on relevant elements of the UN Integrated Technical Guidance Notes on SSR, political and technical support were defined as seen in Figure 1 (below).[19] The challenge in this context is that categorizing an activity as political often requires understanding its purpose and

effects. Hence, due to the methodological limitations of the study, a simplified approach to categorizing political engagement was taken, encompassing those activities aimed at facilitating discussions, often through good offices, advocacy, or mediation efforts. Technical engagement was deemed as direct assistance to national counterparts. However, in many cases a single activity requires both political *and* technical elements of support; where this was explicit, an activity was coded as both. Furthermore, in some cases, a technical activity may actually have a political objective, but this could not be captured through the methodology used for this study. While this approach cannot account for all elements of political engagement, it can nonetheless offer a snapshot of overall trends in support.

Political engagement	Technical engagement
Political engagement encompasses activities with a political objective. For the purposes of this study, activities were categorized as involving political engagement if they sought to facilitate agreement among actors on sensitive aspects of the DSR process, affecting the balance of power among actors and communities, and were usually achieved through the facilitation of dialogue or the provision of good offices or mediation support. Support to coordination efforts was also included in this category.	Activities were categorized as **technical engagement** if they sought to provide direct assistance to national actors through capacity development of individual actors, including training and equipment, technical assistance in the development of plans, policies, etc., or specialized technical advice. Support to physical or infrastructure reforms was also included in this category.

Figure 1: Political versus technical engagement

(ii) UN DSR support at the tactical, operational, or strategic levels

14. The UN DSR Policy also notes that support can be provided at **the tactical, operational, or strategic levels,** recognizing that a multilevel and multidirectional approach is vital to comprehensive DSR support. Yet, little information is provided on what engagement on each of these levels implies in practice. For the purposes of this study, activities were assigned to one of these three levels (see Figure 2), but as they are not mutually exclusive, the analysis acknowledges that an activity often involves engagement at multiple levels.[20]

Strategic level

Activities were assigned to the **strategic level** if they were intended to provide broad policy guidance aimed at developing a national vision and political agreement on (often contested) aspects of defence sector governance development and reform.

Operational level

Activities were assigned to the **operational level** if they were intended to equip the defence sector with human, financial, and material resources for essential functions.

Tactical level

Activities were assigned to the **tactical level** if they were focused on individuals, such as the training of defence sector personnel.

Figure 2: Levels of engagement

(iii) UN DSR engagement with national actors

15. The UN DSR Policy defines the defence sector as comprising not only civil-military structures, but also actors responsible for governance, oversight, management, and the command and control of defence, including legislative bodies, ministries, education and research centres, and civil society groups. Consequently, the Policy calls for the inclusion of all national stakeholders within a defence sector when providing DSR support.[21] For this reason, the **national actors** specifically mentioned in mandates and reports were also analysed to understand the extent to which the Security Council and Secretariat reflected this principle of inclusiveness in mandates and reports.

(iv) Categories of UN DSR support as outlined in the DSR Policy[22]

16. A list of **core tasks** for UN support to DSR, separated into broad categories, is presented in the DSR Policy.[23] This list guides the UN on what support can be provided and theoretically provides a benchmark for assessing the comprehensiveness of UN DSR support in line with national priorities on the ground. However, there were several challenges in using these categories as a basis for reviewing DSR support in mandates and reporting, as the DSR Policy does not clearly define the different types of DSR support it outlines.[24] For instance, the policy foresees defence sector review and coordination as a single category, despite the fact that the objectives of these activities differ considerably; and under the category "formation and education", institutional approaches to education within the defence sector (e.g., support to national expertise for curricula development and education or logistical support to defence academies) are lacking, and the focus is instead on tactical training tasks related to issues such as human rights and gender. Moreover, the DSR Policy does not reflect on some of the tasks frequently performed in the field, such as assistance in the development of force structure and force planning.

17. For this study, and based on the UN DSR Policy, the following categories of core tasks for UN support to DSR were considered: governance and oversight; defence legislation, norms, doctrine, and/or overall reform plan development; administration, budget development, and management; education system;[25] consensus building among national stakeholders and reconciliation; defence sector review; and defence sector coordination.[26] On top of this, three categories were added to complement those laid out in the DSR Policy: assistance in the development of force structure and force planning; logistics and procurement infrastructure development; and cross-cutting issues within the defence sector.[27] This last category helps, among other things, address the failure of the DSR Policy to address gender-sensitive approaches as a specific area of DSR support, other than from the perspective of training.[28]

Figure 3: Categories of core UN defence sector reform tasks drawn from the UN DSR Policy[29]

- governance and oversight
- defence legislation, norms, doctrine, and/or overall reform plan development
- administration, budget development, and management
- education system
- consensus building among national stakeholders and reconciliation
- defence sector review
- coordination of support to national DSR processes
- *assistance in the development of force structure and force planning*
- *logistics and procurement infrastructure development*
- *cross-cutting issues within the defence sector*

II. FINDINGS

18. This mapping exercise resulted in a series of findings related to (a) the type and scope of Security Council mandates on DSR, (b) the type of engagement reported on, and (c) broader mandating and reporting practices related to DSR.

(A) Security Council mandates on DSR

19. UN Security Council resolutions provide a window onto the type of support considered a priority by the Security Council when the UN engages in DSR support. Over the 155 UN Security Council resolutions reviewed, a total of 84 mandates called for DSR-related support. Among these 84 mandates, 46 were adopted during the period of 2006 to 2010 – before the UN DSR Policy was introduced – and contained 55 explicit references to DSR. By contrast, there were 71 explicit references to DSR in just 38 resolutions issued after the policy was introduced, from 2011 to 2016. This reveals an **increased prioritization by the Security Council of DSR support when mandating peacekeeping operations and special political missions.** This section provides an overview of the types of DSR support specified in mandates for both PKOs and SPMs.

DSR mandates in PKOs and SPMs

20. Among the mandates reviewed for PKOs, 69 included specific references to support for DSR processes. **This corresponds to a total of 10 peacekeeping operations having mandates for DSR support.** Still, most of these operations were only mandated to provide support in one specific area of DSR, varying from international coordination of DSR efforts (e.g., UNMIS) to defence sector review (e.g., UNMIT). **Only 3 could be considered to have received a comprehensive mandate in line with the criteria set out by the DSR Policy.** Indeed, only UNOCI, MONUC, and MONUSCO have been tasked to engage at different levels in more than four categories of support, ranging from governance and oversight to facilitating coordination or assisting in the development of force structure and force planning.[30]

21. There are fewer DSR mandates for SPMs than for PKOs, making it difficult to draw reliable generalizations on SPMs. Indeed, out of the 56 Security Council SPM mandates reviewed for this study, only 15 explicitly call for support to DSR processes. While more SPMs had broader SSR mandates, only four – UNSMIL, UNAMA, UNOWA, and UNIOGBIS – had an explicit mandate in the area of DSR. Notably, **only UNSMIL had a comprehensive DSR mandate**, incorporating political and technical tasks at the strategic and operational levels. The other three missions have only been mandated to support a specific DSR aspect (e.g., coordination of international assistance in the case of UNAMA). However, despite the fact that the mandates of BINUCA, UNSOM, and UNIOSIL do not specifically address DSR, these missions have **implicit mandates to support DSR under broader SSR-related mandates**. (See Table 2 in the Annex for an overview of mandates for SPMs).

(i) Political and/or technical DSR tasks as reflected in Security Council mandates

22. Given the recognition by Member States and the Secretariat that DSR is political in nature, the assumption of this study was that mandates would clearly prioritize political tasks for the UN.

23. For **PKOs**, findings instead indicated that a **large majority (62%)[31] of the DSR-mandated tasks have been technical in nature**.[32] Indeed, until 2016, all such mandates in peacekeeping operations in Côte d'Ivoire, Timor-Leste, Liberia, South Sudan, and Mali were for technical support, ranging from training to advice. Mandates for operations in the DRC (MONUC and MONUSCO) are the only ones to have had both political and technical elements in the area of DSR. On the other hand, only 20% of PKO mandates called specifically for political DSR tasks – in Sudan, CAR, and the DRC. Most commonly, political DSR mandates tasked the UN with coordinating support among international partners (e.g., MINUSCA, MINUSMA, and MONUSCO). This smaller number of political DSR mandates may be due to the tendency to assign certain **political tasks under broader SSR support mandates.** For instance, while only 12 Security Council resolutions mandated the coordination of support specifically in the area of DSR, an additional 11 resolutions called for the coordination of support on broader SSR efforts.

24. For **SPMs**, DSR mandated tasks requiring a **political engagement accounted for 63%** of mandates for DSR support.[33] The broad political coordination mandates of other SPMs tend to refer to SSR, rather than specifically to DSR (e.g., UNSMIL, UNIOGBIS, and BINUCA); however, for the purposes of this study, which is focused on DSR-specific mandates, these broader mandates are not considered in the data. Technical DSR tasks make up 38% of those mandated in SPMs, and most were called for in resolutions issued from 2011 to 2016, indicating an increased focus on technical DSR support in political missions during the period under review.[34]

(ii) Tactical, operational, and strategic engagement reflected in Security Council mandates

25. For **PKOs**, over **50% of DSR-mandated tasks call for engagement in DSR support at the strategic (policy) level**. This includes assisting national authorities in the initial planning of DSR processes, for instance. Only 16% of the DSR-mandated tasks in PKOs specifically targeted tactical (individual) engagement. These were mainly focused on training and were limited to Côte d'Ivoire and the DRC. Engagement at the operational (institutional) level only represented 7% of the overall DSR support mandated, all in the DRC.[35]

26. For **SPMs**, **the majority (88%) of the DSR support specified in mandates also calls for engagement at the strategic (policy) level.** In fact, of the 15 resolutions that specifically mandate DSR support in SPMs, 14 call for strategic engagement. This is especially true for UNAMA and UNIOGBIS. Mandates at the strategic level include assisting a government in enhancing the coordination of international assistance to the defence sector (e.g., UNAMA) or providing strategic advice on developing civilian and military justice systems (e.g., UNIOGBIS). **Only 2 SPM mandates (UNSMIL and UNOWA) call for support at the operational (institutional) level. None call for engagement at the tactical level.**
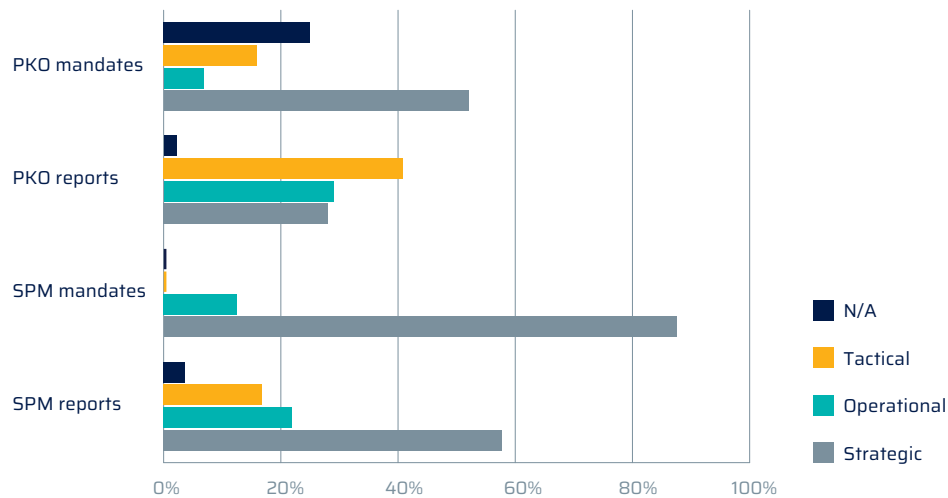
(iii) National actors referred to in Security Council mandates on DSR

27. The expected scope of UN engagement in terms of counterparts is not always specified in mandates. In the review of mandates undertaken for this study, a key finding is that **DSR-related mandates for both PKOs and SPMs exclusively refer to state actors (but never to legislative bodies) and never specifically call for UN DSR support to engage civil society or the media.**

28. For **PKOs**, 55% of mandates for DSR specify UN engagement with "the government" but do not cite which institutions should be engaged. Another 59% of mandates call for direct support to armed forces in addition to, or instead of the government. Only mandates for Timor-Leste have explicitly focused on supporting the Ministry of Defence (MoD), in 7 resolutions; and the mandates for South Sudan and the DRC are the only ones that call for support to military justice institutions (also in 7 resolutions). In 4 resolutions for UNOCI, mandates link DSR to inter-institutional reforms and security sector governance by requesting the promotion of trust and confidence within and between the armed forces and law enforcement agencies.[36]

29. For **SPMs,** the majority (67%) of DSR mandates also refer to "the government". The armed forces are addressed in 7% of these mandates, but 27% don't specify engagement with any national actors. **None of the SPM mandates analysed for this study call for specific support to the MoD, the legislature (e.g., parliamentarians or parliamentary committees), civil society, or the media.**

(iv) Categories of DSR support reflected in Security Council mandates

30. In the case of **PKOs**, the most frequently mandated DSR task is the development of **force structure and force planning.** This support was called for in the mandates of 5 of the 11 peacekeeping operations reviewed and represented 32% of the DSR support mandated overall. Mandates in this area mainly focus on engagement at the strategic level through technical support, such as advising a government on the organization of a future national army.[37] DSR mandated tasks aimed at addressing **cross-cutting issues**,[38] such as human rights or child protection within the defence sector, are the second most common type of task mandated in PKOs.[39] Most mandates in this area call for technical support while engaging at the tactical level, because they primarily refer to training activities for individuals.

31. While broader SSR mandates for PKOs often call for coordination roles for the UN, when it comes specifically to DSR, just 11% of DSR support is focused on strengthening the **coordination of international assistance to DSR**, and this mainly in Sudan, CAR, and the DRC. In a few cases, mandates have specified support to **building consensus** among national stakeholders or to strengthening the **administration, budget development, and management of the defence sector**. The latter has been linked primarily to vetting processes, although in practice this has only been explicitly mandated in Côte d'Ivoire and the DRC. Just 9% of the overall DSR support mandated in PKOs has been in the area of **governance and oversight reforms**, and the majority of this support is limited to strengthening military justice institutions. Further, while **civilian oversight** was sometimes mentioned in the UN Security Council resolutions analysed for this study, this element **was never incorporated into the operative paragraphs that establish the mandates of peacekeeping operations.**

32. This review did not find any PKO-mandated tasks to specifically support strengthening the education systems to which military personnel are subject. Additionally, resolutions very rarely address the need to provide logistical support or to develop infrastructure.

33. In the case of **SPMs,** the majority (over 55%) of mandates related to DSR call for the **coordination of international support to DSR,** guided by the principle of national ownership. Still, this coordination has only been explicitly mandated in the missions in Afghanistan and Libya. The mandates of a few other missions encourage coordination in the area of defence, but the resolutions establishing these missions have not incorporated these tasks within the operative paragraphs that define their mandates.[40]

34. The second most frequently mandated category of DSR in resolutions establishing SPMs (28%) is support to **governance and oversight mechanisms**. Mandates in this area often call for technical support at the strategic level. However, in most resolutions, this support is limited to a focus on military justice. Additionally, 11% of DSR mandated tasks in SPMs refer to **cross-cutting issues** within defence sector reform, in particular human rights and gender-related issues. These mandates (UNSMIL, UNAMA, and UNOWA) call for both technical and political support, and also for engagement at different levels (strategic, institutional, and individual).

35. From 2006 to 2016, the SPMs reviewed in this study were never mandated to assist in the development of force structure and force planning, or support the administration of defence institutions, the development of their budget, or the strengthening of their systems of management and education.

Reflections on Security Council practices related to DSR mandates

36. This analysis has highlighted three common mandating practices by the UN Security Council. First, despite an increase in the number of DSR support mandates, these are often renewed without updates or modifications; **over the ten-year period reviewed for this study (2006–2016), 71% of mandates for DSR support were repeatedly renewed without changes. The risk is that these mandates no longer match realities on the ground and are therefore unfit for purpose.** The use of 'formulaic mandate tasks' and identical phrasing across mandates may provide flexibility but may also hinder efforts to prioritize and sequence mandates, as noted in the HIPPO report.[41]

■ Mandates renewed without modification
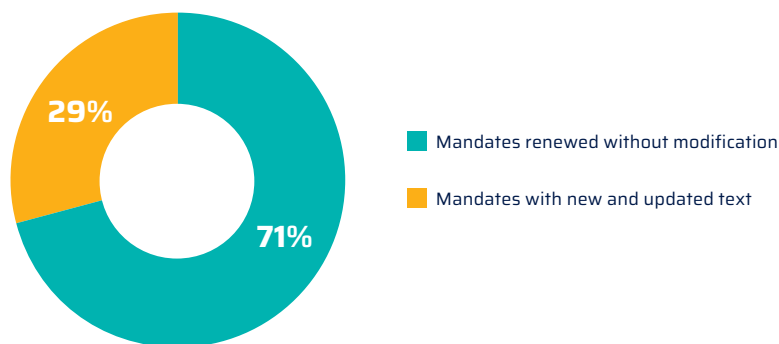
■ Mandates with new and updated text

Figure 5: Proportion of mandates with new text vs mandates renewed without modifications

37. Also, perhaps as a consequence of the practices cited above, the mandates of peace operations are often ambiguous regarding the type of support that is expected to be delivered on the ground, to whom it should be delivered, and in what way. While some mandates clearly specify the role of field operations in DSR support, many others only include broad calls to support "the development of capable defence institutions" or "military justice institutions", without further instruction as to how that should be achieved. For this reason, few of the Missions reviewed for this study were considered to have a comprehensive mandate to support DSR processes, which would span different levels of engagement and address several categories of core tasks.

38. This ambiguity often leaves much room for interpretation about how support should be provided, and this may contribute to the poor allocation of resources in this field. DSR support falls to the SSR teams of field operations, which only rarely have a DSR capacity in place. For example, despite lacking specialized capacity, UNMIL was asked to assist the transnational government in the formation of a new and restructured Liberian military.[42] One exception in this context is the SSR section within MINUSCA, which incorporated military personnel into its defence advisory cell.[43]

39. In the ongoing review of DSR policy and implementation, it is important to consider how Security Council practices related to support for DSR affect key steps in mandate implementation. In particular, **more research should be undertaken to assess how the absence of tailor-made, context-specific, and sequenced DSR mandates has impacted the planning, budgeting, and capacities of DSR support**. The absence of comprehensive DSR mandates may also require review, to determine whether this simply reflects needs on the ground or indicates an inability to achieve consensus on more far-reaching mandates that may enable more transformative reforms.

(B) DSR as reflected in regular reports of the Secretary-General on UN operations

40. UN Security Council resolution 2151 (2014) asked the Secretary-General to "highlight in his regular reports to the Security Council on specific UN operations mandated by the Security Council, updates on progress of security sector reform [and by association DSR], where mandated, in order to improve Security Council oversight of security sector reform activities."[44]

41. Reports of the Secretary-General include DSR-related analysis and discuss activities implemented in the field, offering a broad snapshot of the significance assigned by the Secretariat to developments in DSR support and indicating the scope and type of support provided in the direction of DSR mandates. This study indicates that reporting on DSR-related activities increased over the ten-year period reviewed. In the case of **SPMs,** the **number of DSR activities recorded in reports of the Secretary-General rose from 18 in the period from 2006 to 2010, to 111 in the period from 2011 to 2016 (increasing 616% in the second period).** This was also true **for PKOs,** for which **84 activities were reported in the period from 2006 to 2010, and 132 were reported in the period from 2011 to 2016 (increasing 157% in the second period).**

Figure 6: Number of DSR activities reported
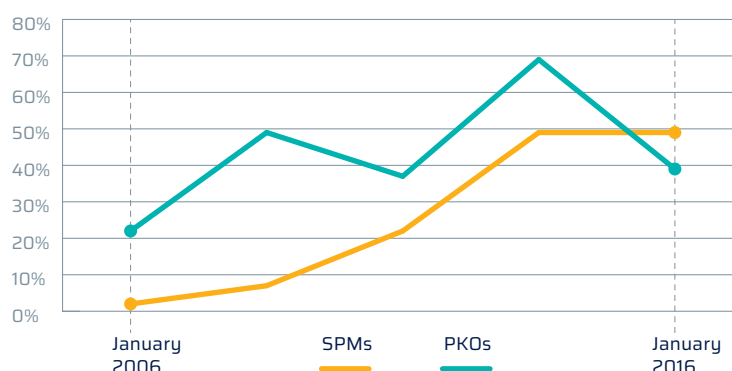
42. While there was a notable increase in the volume of reporting around the time the DSR Policy was issued, there was no significant change in terms of reporting practices. There were also no changes to the types of DSR activities contained in reports, both in terms of political and technical engagement at the strategic, political, and tactical levels or categories of support.

Reporting on DSR in PKOs and SPMs

43. Around 40% of the 369 reports of the Secretary-General reviewed for this study included specific information on DSR activities carried out by (or with the support of) PKOs and SPMs.[45] **According to the reports analysed, many PKOs have made efforts to provide comprehensive DSR support.** According to reports of the Secretary-General, support in countries such as Timor-Leste, Sudan, South Sudan, CAR, the DRC, and Côte d'Ivoire engaged both technical and political efforts at the operational, strategic, and individual levels, covering at least four of the ten areas of support identified in this study. However, the number of activities reported with a **political engagement was often marginal** and mainly focused on

coordination. Hence support in these countries has predominantly been reported to take place at the technical level.[46] In other countries, engagement in DSR support has been limited to one or two areas of support.[47] (See Table 3 in the Annex for an overview of the DSR support reported in PKOs).

44. While SPMs have few mandates that specifically call for support to DSR processes, these missions have reportedly engaged in this area under the auspices of broad SSR mandates. In total, 59 of 134 reports reviewed for this study included DSR-specific activities carried out by (or with the support of) SPMs. Among the missions analysed, DSR support has played an important role in the work of UNSOM, UNSMIL, and UNIOGBIS, both in terms of volume and comprehensiveness of support provided. Additionally, BINUCA, BNUB, and UNOWA have also reportedly provided comprehensive DSR support, through political and technical engagement and at both the operational and strategic levels, in at least four areas of support, albeit with less DSR-specific activities reported.

(i) Political and/or technical DSR engagement as reflected in reports of the Secretary-General

45. Reports of the Secretary-General on **PKOs** primarily describe **technical aspects of DSR, which represent 81% of the DSR activities described in reports.** Examples include the provision of office equipment; infrastructure rehabilitation support; the delivery of training to military personnel on a wide range of issues, including sexual and gender-based violence, human rights, and criminal investigation methods; and assistance to MoD officials in verifying armed forces personnel.[48] Meanwhile, reporting on political engagement accounts for less than one-fifth of instances of DSR support in PKOs. Just 17% of the DSR activities reported on by the Secretary-General refer to a political dimension of UN engagement, such as advocacy on support for the development of army reform plans, the facilitation of discussions between MoD and bilateral partners for further development of armed forces, and advocacy on the mobilization of resources.[49]

46. In the case of **SPMs,** only half **(51%) of the reporting on DSR support describes technical support.** Reporting on engagement of a political nature represents around one-third (34%) of all reporting on DSR support in SPMs. According to reports of the Secretary-General, **political activities are mostly focused on the coordination of reform processes, and sometimes on encouraging political dialogue**.[50]
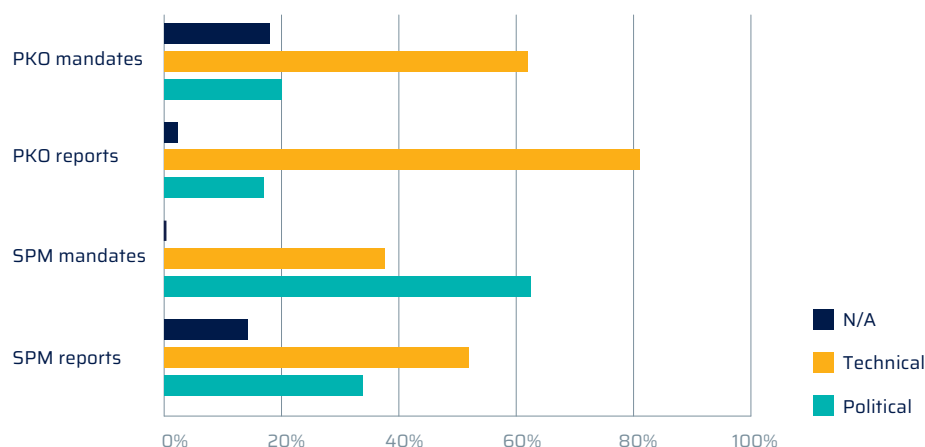

Figure 7: Political and technical engagement mandated and reported

(ii) Tactical, operational, and strategic UN DSR engagement reflected in reports of the Secretary-General

47. While the mandates of **PKOs** mainly call for strategic engagement with national stakeholders**,** reports of the Secretary-General **focus strongly on engagement at the tactical (individual) level, largely through the provision of training.[51]** Tactical engagement was referenced in 41% of reported instances of DSR support in PKOs. Notably, training of military personnel was highlighted in reporting, without such activity being placed within a framework of political processes or institution building.

48. In PKOs, engagement at the operational level (e.g., assisting the MoD in preliminary verifications of national armed forces personnel)[52] is equal to engagement at the strategic level (e.g., providing support to a national committee on DDR and SSR in developing strategic principles for the integration of ex-combatants into security and defence forces),[53] at 28% and 29% respectively.

49. On the contrary, in **SPMs**, reporting reflects considerably more **engagement at the strategic (policy) level, amounting to well over half of references (58%)**, focused on DSR coordination and support to developing defence legislation, norms, doctrine, and/or overall reform plans. Reporting on engagement at the operational (institutional) level represents 22% of the overall reporting for SPMs. Examples of activities at this level include support to facilitate a biometric census of armed forces and logistical support for the integration of forces.[54] References to tactical engagement account for only 17% of the reporting on DSR support in SPMs.

(iii) National actors reflected in reports of the Secretary-General

50. Reports of the Secretary-General overwhelmingly focus on DSR support that engages members of the armed forces, particularly soldiers or officers (named in 61% of the DSR-related activities identified for PKOs and in 28% of those reported for SPMs). To a lesser degree, Secretary-General reports also refer to DSR engagement with Ministries of Defence (13% for PKOs and 17% for SPMs) when highlighting objectives related to reviewing the defence sector and improving the administration, budget development, and management of armed forces. In some cases, reporting also references DSR engagement with military justice institutions. This is more often true for PKOs (8% of reporting) than for SPMs (2% of reporting).

51. **According to the reports of the Secretary-General, other actors, including other security sector actors, have only rarely been engaged by peace operations in their DSR support. This is also the case for legislative bodies** (engagement with which represents a mere 1% of reporting for PKOs and even less than 1% for SPMs; mainly in Côte d'Ivoire, Timor-Leste, and Burundi),[55] as well as for civil society (which is explicitly cited in only 1% of reporting for PKOs and SPMs; mainly in Côte d'Ivoire and Timor-Leste). In fact, the reports reviewed for this study include **only a single specific mention of civil society as a direct counterpart in DSR processes**, in the context of training delivered to "42 members of civil society and community-based organizations, including seven women, on monitoring human rights situations and violations, including those committed by the armed forces."[56] Engagement with the media in the area of DSR has never been reported on by the Secretary-General.

*(iv) DSR support categories reflected in reports of the Secretary-General*

52. For **PKOs**, engagement on **cross-cutting issues** accounts for 27% of all reported DSR-related activities, with particular attention given to child protection and sexual and gender-based violence.[57] For some missions, this type of support has constituted a majority of the support reflected in reports (e.g., 85% for UNAMID).

53. Efforts towards strengthening **governance and oversight mechanisms** represent 11% of the DSR support described in reports of the Secretary-General, with reported engagement at the strategic, institutional, and individual levels in PKOs. A few of these activities involve providing technical support on democratic oversight to legislative bodies[58] or conducting training for military officers on command responsibility or accountability,[59] but most efforts in this area are aimed at establishing or improving the military justice system.[60]

54. Assistance in the development of **force structure and force planning** (through the provision of primarily technical support at the institutional and strategic levels) and **logistics and infrastructure development** (through technical support provided at the institutional level) represent 8% of the DSR tasks referenced in reports. The first area has been particularly relevant in peacekeeping operations in Côte d'Ivoire and Timor-Leste, the latter in Côte d'Ivoire and CAR.[61] Support to the administration, budget development, and management of armed forces has been reported to a lesser extent; nevertheless, support in this area has played a significant role in certain countries, such as CAR.[62]

55. For **SPMs**, the most common activities reported on by the Secretary-General in the period analysed were also related to **cross-cutting issues** (21%), with a strong focus on the promotion of human rights and to a lesser extent on child protection and gender issues. Reporting mainly highlighted technical aspects of support and implied strong engagement at the individual level, with fewer mentions of engagement at the strategic and operational levels. The second most frequent area of support referenced in reports was the **development of defence legislation, norms, doctrine, and/or overall reform plans** (16%). This includes, for instance, providing experts on defence legislation (UNSMIL) or advice on the development of a strategic plan for reforms of the armed forces (BNUB).[63] Thus, support of this type had both a political and a technical dimension and mainly involved engagement at the strategic level. **Coordination of international assistance** in DSR (e.g., co-chairing meetings and undertaking advocacy vis-à-vis the donor community) also represented a significant share of reporting by the Secretary-General (15%).[64]

56. **Administration, budget development, and management** is another area of DSR support reported on for SPMs (10%), mainly consisting of technical support and reflecting engagement at the strategic and institutional levels. For instance, UNSMIL has worked with the Libyan Army on a proposal for pension reform and incentives for early retirement,[65] and UNIOGBIS has provided support to the vetting and certification process for armed forces personnel.[66] Support to the development of force structure and force planning in SPMs has also been referenced in reports of the Secretary-General. However, other activities specifically focusing on **building consensus among national stakeholders were less reported on**. For example, UNSMIL has been tasked with encouraging political dialogue on DSR processes among national security forces and armed groups.[67] In the context of SPMs, no support related to improving the education system

has been reported, nor to logistics and procurement infrastructure development in the area of defence. Finally, while reports of the Secretary-General give the impression that SPMs are not involved in defence sector reviews with any regularity, in practice, these missions may provide support in this area under broader SSR reviews.[68]

Reflections on reporting practices related to DSR

57. Although the Secretary-General has committed to providing the Security Council with "a comprehensive analysis" in reports,[69] this review of 369 reports of the Secretary-General reveals that they offer a fragmented narrative when it comes to both DSR developments and UN support that is typically delinked from the strategic objectives outlined by the Security Council. **Less than a third of reporting on PKOs and half of reporting on SPMs includes references to DSR-related activities under a dedicated section on SSR.** In most cases, DSR engagement is instead reflected inconsistently throughout reports, under sections as diverse as "DSR", "human rights", "gender", "extension of state authority", "rule of law", and "DDR". There are also some cases in which DSR activities have been discussed in sections of reports that detail the coordination of international assistance. There are various reasons for this dispersal of DSR tasks and the different reporting practices, but these underscore the absence of a single integrated and/ or coordinated approach to reporting on UN or international partner engagement in DSR. This makes it difficult to draw clear linkages to the broader trajectory of engagement with and progress in this sector.

Figure 8: Categories of DSR core tasks as reported in the Secretary-General Reports
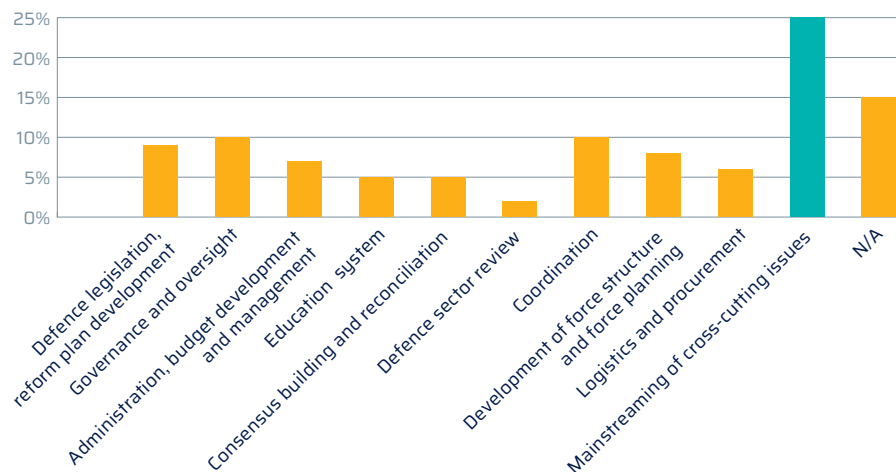
58. Moreover, **reporting is often limited to listing activities and is rarely linked to analysis of the political dynamics at play, which may constrain the UN's ability to engage in more comprehensive support to DSR.** Such activity-based reporting practices during the period analysed present a challenge to assessing whether DSR support is being provided within the broader political and institution-building efforts of SSR. For instance, the reports have highlighted that 62% of the support provided by peace operations to mainstream cross-cutting issues (e.g., human rights or gender) has been conducted through training, without explicit linkages to broader institution-building approaches. Only 19% of cross-cutting support has been delivered through a more strategic approach (e.g., development of action plans). The reports would therefore suggest that this type of support was not

delivered with the aim of moving beyond individual capacity building and towards more strategic-level engagement.[70] It is not clear from the reports whether this is because support was not anchored in a broader institution-building strategy or because there was no political space to engage at this level.
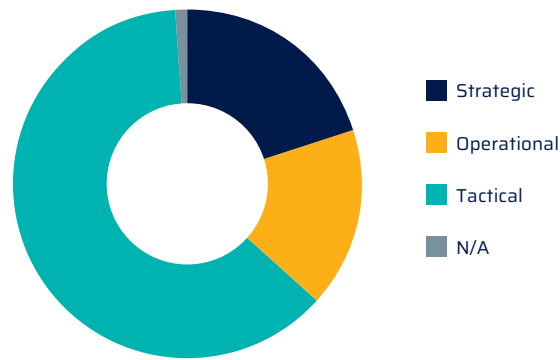
Figure 9: Level of engagement when mainstreaming cross-cutting issues into the defence sector

Strategic
Operational
Tactical
N/A

59. **The reporting also lacks clear linkages as to how activities contribute (or not) to the political goals established in a Security Council mandate.** This information is essential to understand how activities feed into the objectives of the mission, including exit strategies. Many UN Security Council resolutions emphasize the importance of assessing the progress made in the implementation of mandates against a set of benchmarks developed in consultation with the national government. However, while benchmarks referring to DSR (in the benchmark itself or in the relevant indicator) exist for several missions (e.g., UNOCI, UNMIT, UNMIS, MONUSCO, UNAMA, and BNUB), the reports of the Secretary-General do not systematically report on progress against these.[71]

60. Finally**, reports of the Secretary-General do not systematically detail the support provided by non-mission actors, including by other UN agencies.[72]** Given the prominence of DSR coordination mandates and the scope of non-UN support to DSR, we would expect to see consistent and explicit accounts of support provided by international partners operating under or in the context of a Security Council mandate on DSR.

III. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

61. Defence institutions should play a vital role in sustaining peace. They exist to protect state territories and populations, and to maintain stability, if necessary through a measured use of force. But when instrumentalized for political gain, when engaged in extortion, corruption and graft, or when insufficiently equipped to implement transformational change, their stabilizing role can quickly become a complicating factor – contributing to heightening tensions, igniting grievances, and fuelling violent conflict. It is therefore important that the UN continue to invest in supporting efforts to build defence institutions that safeguard democratic norms, remain accountable and subject to civilian control, and are adequately managed and resourced, professional, and operationally effective.

62. This study has highlighted that the UN is significantly engaged in DSR support through its peacekeeping operations and special political missions. To respond to the evolving political and security landscapes in which PKOs and SPMs are tasked with performing complex DSR tasks, as well as to growing defence sector support requirements in non-mission settings, there is a need to render UN engagement nimbler, more politically proficient, and more responsive to realities on the ground. This entails anchoring DSR assistance in the broader policy frameworks of prevention and sustaining peace, and creating political space in country-specific settings for addressing governance challenges within the defence sector.

63. On the basis of the analysis of Security Council mandates and reports of the Secretary-General, this study puts forth three sets of empirically based recommendations. They are aimed at (i) informing the way future DSR mandates are crafted, (ii) improving reporting on DSR, and (iii) informing the review of the 2011 UN DSR Policy.

Recommendations for the Security Council on mandating

64. **Recommendation 1: Systematically refer to the key tenets of UN Security Council Resolution 2151 (2014) in relevant DSR-mandated tasks**. Resolution 2151 reiterates that SSR is instrumental to state-building and acknowledges that SSR, including DSR, should be in support of, and informed by, broader national political processes and inclusive of all segments of the society. When applied in conjunction with good offices and across technical and advisory support, the key tenets of resolution 2151 – national ownership, inclusivity, good governance, gender-responsiveness – should provide PKOs and SPMs with leverage to advocate for sensitive reforms of the defence sector. Moreover, references to resolution 2151 within mandates serve as a means to build awareness of and uphold SSR/DSR principles that are instrumental to nationally-owned and led SSR/DSR efforts, even when a local context is not yet ripe for such processes to take root. They also facilitate follow-up by national authorities and international partners throughout the implementation of relevant DSR commitments.

65. **Recommendation 2: Adjust DSR mandates depending on context-specific dynamics and evolving national needs and priorities.** Over 70% of the mandates for DSR support reviewed for this study and covering a ten-year period were repeatedly renewed without any changes. Efforts should be made to ensure that

mandates are informed by assessments of the progress made in implementing, *inter alia*, national normative frameworks on SSR/DSR, security and defence provisions in peace agreements, and SSR/DDR commitments stemming from regional and sub-regional cooperation instruments. Furthermore, in line with Security Council resolution 2151 (2014) and the 2013 report of the Secretary-General on SSR, mission mandates should incorporate the perspectives of host countries.

66. **Recommendation 3: Articulate DSR tasks that are clearly linked to broader SSR mandates and political objectives that sustain peace and enable the exit of PKOs and SPMs.** Engagement in support of national DSR processes should be understood as an integral part of efforts to broker political consensus on inclusive and sustainable security governance arrangements. Addressing conflict drivers within the security sector, including defence institutions, helps create conditions for peace processes to advance and for resilient societies to be built. Among these, an emphasis should be placed on bolstering the accountability of defence forces, as well as on fostering inclusivity, effective management, and oversight. This study highlights the need for DSR mandates to provide further emphasis on these governance-related aspects of reforms. Mandate tasks that emphasise good governance establish a clear channel to an SRSG's good offices and provide a focus for his/her role in the coordination of international DSR assistance aligned with the 'primacy of politics'.

67. **Recommendation 4: Incorporate elements of strategic sequencing of DSR mandates to ensure complementarity with priority mission objectives.** Meaningful progress on DSR relies on early identification of the most feasible approach to institution-building in the field of defence that advances political processes, protection of civilians, or stabilization, depending on mandate priorities. While the defence sector often receives a multiplicity of support from various partners in particular in the area of train-and-equip, there is a risk that support to strategic objectives that may have been identified – such as strengthening the accountability or inclusiveness of defence institutions – is neglected without clear prioritization through the mandate. Determinations regarding the sequencing of DSR support should result from consultations between national and international stakeholders. To inform such considerations, the Security Council could request that the Secretariat produce DSR support planning options, premised on technical assessments, to inform mandating.

Recommendations for the Secretariat on reporting

68. **Recommendation 5: Consistently mainstream DSR into political analysis and recommendations outlined in reports of the Secretary-General.** Initiatives to transform the defence sector often remain insufficiently analysed in these reports and are not reported on in a coherent manner. The Secretariat should work to ensure a coordinated approach to reporting on DSR, showcasing in the "political developments" section of reports how DSR support contributes to political objectives and, in the "observations" sections, devising messaging on the linkages between DSR and broader national reform agendas, as appropriate. This demands early consultations among all relevant mission components contributing to the report, in order to demonstrate the linkages between technical interventions and strategic engagement at the political level and to establish predictable reporting workstreams that enable the transfer of DSR-related

analysis to senior mission leadership. Reports of the Secretary-General should (a) strive to assess national DSR developments that support political or national-reconciliation processes, identifying trends and entry points for engagement and (b) evaluate the effects of UN DSR assistance vis-à-vis strategic outcomes, such as the mission exit and contributions to sustainable peace. Additionally, as far as possible, reporting on DSR should also consistently include a sector-specific gender analysis, along with updates on the progress and challenges of mainstreaming the Women, Peace, and Security agenda in defence sector interventions in line with UNSCR 2493 (2019).

69. **Recommendation 6: Strengthen reporting on international SSR/DSR assistance to leverage the UN's important coordination role towards ensuring that such assistance is aligned with nationally-owned priorities and relevant international principles.** One factor hampering coordination is the reluctance of some international partners to share information on SSR/DSR support, as noted in the 2013 report of the Secretary-General on SSR. Reports of the Secretary-General offer a much-needed platform for the accurate depiction of contributions to nationally led DSR processes. Information contained in these reports can serve as a baseline for coordination among national and international partners, facilitating the alignment of messaging, complementarities, and resource pooling to collectively contribute to the transformation of a defence sector in line with national priorities and serving the needs of the population. To this end, reports should to the extent possible (a) systematically map support by UN entities and international partners to the host nation on DSR, (b) identify challenges and opportunities related to the implementation of UN SSR/DSR coordination mandates, and (c) inform the development of guidance that fosters coherent international approaches.

Recommendations for the Secretariat on the DSR Policy review

70. **Recommendation 7: Differentiate between DSR objectives and interventions to improve reporting and evaluation of progress.** The current list of 'core tasks' for the UN set out in the DSR policy should be reviewed and updated to provide for more coherent categories. In particular, the Policy should draw a distinction between the objectives of UN DSR support, such as enhancing defence sector governance, and the interventions at political (e.g., good offices) and technical (e.g., capacity-building) levels necessary to achieve these objectives. Enhanced clarity should ensure that field presences are better positioned to engage with national and international partners, measure and report on progress, and adjust interventions. Moreover, such guidance should help overcome fragmentation in mandating and in reporting and enhance accountability.

71. **Recommendation 8: Promote responsive and inclusive DSR processes, respectful of human rights and the rule of law.** In many contexts, missions are deployed in the midst of conflict in environments where no space exists for meaningful civil participation in defence-policy making. The UN DSR Policy should be updated and accompanied by guidance which outlines modalities that promote people-centred DSR processes, while also curbing patterns of exclusion and eliminating participation barriers across ethnic, religious, gender, economic or political fault lines. The Policy should also encourage and propose tangible ways in which DSR practitioners and senior leadership can capitalize on the comparative advantages of the UN – its convening power, political engagement,

and coordination capacity – in order to facilitate broad participation in national DSR processes and harmonious civil-military relations, and restore popular trust by re-establishing the conditions that make a professional and accountable defence sector possible.

72. **Recommendation 9: Ensure that the updated DSR policy more clearly outlines the roles and functions of the United Nations in DSR support as a political undertaking that requires sustained good offices engagement to promote commitment to sensitive reforms.** The review of the DSR Policy should recognize the role of UN principals in creating and maintaining political space for the delivery of DSR mandates and offer guidance and options based on lessons and good practices. The policy should better articulate how UN SRSGs and SESGs could leverage their good offices to advocate for DSR and advise national authorities, to address risks to democratic consolidation and national reconciliation within the defence sector.

73. **Recommendation 10: Outline the strategic value of administration, budget development, and management in implementing sustainable change across the defence sector.** Successful reform of a defence sector requires building responsive defence capacities to perform the core tasks outlined in the UN DSR policy. Ensuring that defence institutions serve the interest of society as a whole also involves changes pertaining to management, structure, and financing. Given the few references to some of these elements of support in mission mandates and reporting, the DSR Policy or accompanying technical guidance should offer DSR practitioners advice on supporting national efforts in highly specialized areas, such as human resources, procurement, and public financial management. This would enhance the contribution of UN support to the development of adaptable, affordable, and interoperable defence sectors.

Table 1: DSR-related mandates of peacekeeping operations (2006–2016)

	DSR MANDATES PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS 2006–2016[73]	CAR (MINUSCA)	Cote d'Ivoire (UNOCI)	Darfur (UNAMID)	DRC (MONUC - MONUSCO)	Haiti (MINUSTAH)	Kosovo (UNMIK)	Liberia (UNMIL)	Mali (MINUSMA)	South Sudan (UNMISS)	Sudan (UNMIS)	Timor-Leste (UNMIT)
Categories of DSR support	Defence legislation, norms, doctrine, and/or overall reform plan development		✓									
	Governance and oversight mechanisms (accountability)				✓					✓		
	Administration, budget development, and management		✓		✓							
	Education system											
	Consensus building among national stakeholders and reconciliation		✓									
	Defence Sector Review											✓
	Coordination of support to national DSR processes	✓			✓						✓	
	Assistance in the development of force structure and force planning		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓			
	Logistics and procurement infrastructure development				✓							
	Cross-cutting issues within the defence sector		✓		✓							
	Not Specified				✓							
Political vs. Technical	Political	✓			✓						✓	
	Technical		✓		✓			✓	✓	✓		✓
	Not Specified		✓	✓	✓							
Level of engagement	Strategic (policy)	✓	✓		✓			✓		✓		✓
	Operational (institutional)				✓							
	Tactical (individual)		✓		✓							
	Not Specified			✓	✓				✓		✓	
National actors engaged	Armed Forces		✓		✓				✓		✓	✓
	Ministry of Defence											✓
	Military justice institutions				✓					✓		
	Government	✓	✓		✓			✓		✓		✓
	Other governmental institutions											
	Legislative bodies											
	Other security actors		✓									
	Civil society											
	Media											
	Not Specified			✓	✓							

Table 2: DSR-related mandates of special political missions (2006–2016)

	DSR MANDATES SPECIAL POLITICAL MISSIONS 2006–2016[74]	Afghanistan (UNAMA)	Burundi (BNUB)	CAR (BINUCA)	Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS)	Iraq (UNAMI)	Libya (UNSMIL)	Sierra Leone (UNIOSIL–UNIPSIL)	Somalia (UNSOM)	Timor-Leste (UNOTIL)	West Africa (UNOWA)
Categories of DSR support	Defence legislation, norms, doctrine, and/or overall reform plan development						✓				
	Governance and oversight mechanisms (accountability)				✓		✓				
	Administration, budget development, and management										
	Education system										
	Consensus building among national stakeholders and reconciliation										
	Defence Sector Review										
	Coordination of support to national DSR processes	✓					✓				
	Assistance in the development of force structure and force planning										
	Logistics and procurement infrastructure development										
	Cross-cutting issues within the defence sector						✓				✓
	Not Specified										
Political vs. technical	Political	✓					✓				
	Technical				✓		✓				✓
	Not Specified										
Level of engagement	Strategic (policy)	✓			✓		✓				
	Operational (institutional)						✓				✓
	Tactical (individual)										
	Not Specified										
National actors engaged	Armed Forces										✓
	Ministry of Defence										
	Military justice institutions										
	Government	✓					✓				
	Other governmental institutions										
	Legislative bodies										
	Other security actors										
	Civil society										
	Media										
	Not Specified				✓						

Table 3: DSR-related support provided by peacekeeping operations according to reports of the Secretary-General (2006–2016)

	REPORTING ON DSR PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS 2006–2016	CAR (MINUSCA)	Cote d'Ivoire (UNOCI)	Darfur (UNAMID)	DRC (MONUC - MONUSCO)	Haiti (MINUSTAH)	Kosovo (UNMIK)	Liberia (UNMIL)	Mali (MINUSMA)	South Sudan (UNMISS)	Sudan (UNMIS)	Timor-Leste (UNMIT)
Categories of DSR support	Defence legislation, norms, doctrine, and/or overall reform plan development	✓	✓		✓					✓		✓
	Governance and oversight mechanisms (accountability)		✓		✓					✓		✓
	Administration, budget development, and management	✓			✓					✓		✓
	Education system	✓			✓			✓		✓	✓	✓
	Consensus building among national stakeholders and reconciliation	✓	✓		✓			✓		✓		✓
	Defence Sector Review		✓		✓						✓	✓
	Coordination of support to national DSR processes				✓						✓	✓
	Assistance in the development of force structure and force planning	✓	✓		✓					✓		✓
	Logistics and procurement infrastructure development	✓	✓		✓				✓		✓	
	Cross-cutting issues within the defence sector	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓
	Not Specified	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓
Political vs. technical	Political	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Technical	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Not Specified				✓					✓		
Level of engagement	Strategic (policy)	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Operational (institutional)	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Tactical (individual)	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Not Specified				✓				✓		✓	
National actors engaged	Armed Forces	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Ministry of Defence	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓			✓
	Military justice institutions		✓		✓					✓		
	Government	✓	✓		✓				✓	✓		✓
	Other governmental institutions	✓	✓		✓							✓
	Legislative bodies		✓									✓
	Other security actors		✓									✓
	Civil society		✓									✓
	Media											
	Not Specified	✓			✓						✓	✓

Table 4: DSR-related support provided by special political missions according to reports of the Secretary-General (2006–2016)

	REPORTING ON DSR SPECIAL POLITICAL MISSIONS 2006–2016	Afghanistan (UNAMA)	Burundi (BNUB)	CAR (BINUCA)	Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS)	Iraq (UNAMI)	Libya (UNSMIL)	Sierra Leone (UNIOSIL -UNIPSIL)	Somalia (UNSOM)	Timor-Leste (UNOTIL)	West Africa (UNOWA)
Categories of DSR support	Defence legislation, norms, doctrine, and/or overall reform plan development		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	Governance and oversight mechanisms (accountability)		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		
	Administration, budget development, and management				✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
	Education system		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓
	Consensus building among national stakeholders and reconciliation				✓		✓	✓			✓
	Defence Sector Review		✓	✓							
	Coordination of support to national DSR processes	✓			✓		✓		✓		✓
	Assistance in the development of force structure and force planning					✓	✓	✓	✓		
	Logistics and procurement infrastructure development			✓			✓				
	Cross-cutting issues within the defence sector	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	Not Specified		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓
Political vs. technical	Political	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓
	Technical	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	Not Specified		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Level of engagement	Strategic (policy)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	Operational (institutional)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	Tactical (individual)		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓
	Not Specified						✓	✓	✓		
National actors engaged	Armed Forces		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
	Ministry of Defence		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		
	Military justice institutions		✓		✓				✓		
	Government			✓	✓		✓		✓		✓
	Other governmental institutions					✓					
	Legislative bodies		✓								
	Other security actors		✓				✓	✓			
	Civil society			✓					✓		
	Media										
	Not Specified	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓

ENDNOTES

1. United Nations–World Bank Group, *Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict* (2017).

2. UN DSR Policy, 2011, para. 7.

3. UN General Assembly–Security Council, "Securing peace and development: the role of the United Nations in supporting security sector reform", Report of the Secretary-General, A/62/659–S/2008/39, 2008.

4. UN Security Council resolution 2151 *on Security Sector Reform*, S/RES/2151 (2014), preamble and paragraph 7.

5. Report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C-34), A/72/19, 15 March 2018, para. 223.

6. UN Security Council resolution 2151; UN, *Uniting Our Strengths for Peace: Politics, Partnerships and People – Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations* (June 2015), para. 154.

7. For instance, the UN report of the Secretary-General on SSR in 2008 outlined ten key principles, which include among others, national ownership, gender sensitivity, and context-specificity (see A/62/659-S/2008/39, para. 45).

8. DCAF is grateful to the UN Inter-Agency SSR Task Force, and in particular the SSR Unit, for having initiated this project, and to its current and former staff for their excellent support and contributions to this study.

9. Concept note for the Review of the DSR Policy, SSR Unit/DPO.

10. UN DSR Policy, 2011, para. 21.2.

11. The exact period examined covered January 2006 – January 2016.

12. This entailed discussions with UN SSR practitioners during sessions at the UN Inter-Agency SSR Task Force Senior Practitioners Workshop in 2017 and 2018; a small meeting with headquarters-based staff in NY in 2017 and in early 2020; and a review of the draft report by practitioners at headquarters and in the field.

13. Because it is a desk-based study, this report is mainly focused on the frequency of different activities aimed at providing support to DSR efforts, as opposed to understanding the quality or depth of this support. In the methodology used, every reference to DSR-related support mentioned in reports of the Secretary-General was counted as a separate action. Thus, while two successive reports may refer to the same action, this study counts them as two separate actions of support. Considering a "long action" as two separate actions and a "short action" as one action mitigates the risk of providing the same value to, for instance, a training course lasting one day or a training course lasting three months.

14. Moving forward, it would be useful to build on this study by conducting in-depth case studies to examine the rationale for UN DSR support in a given country, how this support relates to other international support, and to what extent UN support to DSR is reflected accurately in the reports of the Secretary-General.

15. MINUSTAH and UNMIK were the only two peacekeeping missions examined in which DSR support was neither mandated nor implemented.

16. UN DSR Policy, 2011, paras. 21.1.1. and 21.3.

17. For the purposes of this study, a "variety of categories of DSR tasks" was deemed to encompass four or more categories from the list of categories of core tasks (see Figure 3). It should be noted, however, that the decision to engage in support in these different categories relates primarily to the needs of a country and the other support provided. Hence, though a comprehensive approach should be promoted as a general rule, mandates are entirely context-specific to needs on the ground.

18. The policy recognizes that UN "support to national DSR effort can be exercised at the political and/or technical dimensions."

19. While coordination was considered to be political engagement, it is likely that many efforts in this area were technical in practice and resulted in the exchange of information. Such nuances could not be captured in this study and would require in-depth field research.

20. For instance, a training-of-trainers activity would be categorized as both engagement at the tactical level (e.g., individual defence sector personnel are trained), and at the operational level (e.g., training helps build the capacity of institutions to train their own staff). In cases where a broad statement was made, such as "support has been provided to reform a new military force", without specific reference to the actions that this involved, it was coded as No Answer (N/A).

21. UN DSR Policy, 2011, paras. 15.6 and 59.3.

22. When activities mandated and reported within an overarching task category could be categorized as both technical and political at the same time, they have been coded under both. In other words, some were double counted.

23. These tasks are governance and oversight; defence legislation, norms, doctrine, and/or overall reform plan development; administration, budget development, and management; formation and education; consensus building among national stakeholders and reconciliation; and defence sector review and coordination.

24. Therefore, for the purpose of coding, activities had to be assigned to categories. A coding book was developed, setting out the framework agreed upon with UN counterparts. For instance, though vetting activities could be considered under human resources management, governance, or cross-cutting issues (due to the focus on human rights), in this study, vetting was categorized as human resources management and thus coded under administration, budget development, and management.

25 In the DSR Policy, this category was referred to as "formation and education", but in order to clarify that activities coded in this category are aimed at strengthening the institutional approach to education within the defence sector, it was renamed for this study. For this analysis, formation (i.e., training tasks) has generally been categorized as support to cross-cutting issues, as training would not be an objective in its own right.

26 The DSR Policy merged defence sector review and coordination, but as the objectives of these differ considerably, they are categorized separately in this study.

27 In 2014–2016, UN DPO engaged in a joint project with the EU and NATO to define DSR tasks. This resulted in the identification of additional tasks, beyond those outlined in the DSR Policy, which were thus added to this mapping exercise to ensure a comprehensive picture of UN DSR support. These categories include assistance in the development of force structure and force planning, and logistics and procurement infrastructure development.

28 In the DSR Policy, cross-cutting issues are discussed within "formation and education" tasks, in the context of training and awareness-building activities, but in practice, support to cross-cutting issues has consisted of more than training. While the Policy does note that security sector reform must be gender sensitive and that this should also apply to DSR support, this is only mentioned in an annex (see Annex 2 of the Policy). Annex 4 also notes that the UN could provide support in developing a policy intended to increase the representation of women in the defence sector. But, beyond these two references, the main body of the Policy refers to gender only under the core "formation and education" task.

29 The three additional categories (in italics) are not drawn from the DSR Policy but were added to address gaps in the policy (see explanation in paragraph 16).

30 UNOCI has been mandated to support defence legislation, norms, doctrine, and/or overall reform plan development; administration, budget development, and management; assistance in the development of force structure and force planning; and cross-cutting issues within the defence sector. MONUSCO has been tasked to support governance and oversight mechanisms (accountability); administration, budget development, and management; coordination; assistance in the development of force structure and force planning; logistics and procurement infrastructure development; and mainstreaming cross-cutting issues within the defence sector. MONUC and MONUSCO have been tasked to provide political and technical support at both strategic and operational levels, while UNOCI was only tasked to provide technical support at the strategic level.

31 All percentages in this study have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

32 In 18% of the mandates reviewed, the type of DSR support that should be provided is unclear.

33 This figure, however, would have been significantly lower had the methodology not counted the number of mandated tasks per resolution but per mission.

34 In the period from 2006 to 2010, technical tasks only represented 20% of the overall DSR support mandated; while from 2011 to 2016, technical tasks accounted for 50% of DSR support.

35 See MONUSCO, S/RES/1925 (2010), para. 12(d).

36 See UNOCI, S/RES/2162 (2014), para. 19(e).

37 See UNOCI, S/RES/2112 (2013), para 6.

38 Cross-cutting issues are relevant to more than one sub-component of the security sector and are necessary to ensure a holistic approach to SSR. These are often deemed to include gender and human rights but may also refer to other key issues, such as child protection or the prevention of HIV/AIDS.

39 While this area was frequently mentioned in resolutions, explicit mandates pertained only to Côte d'Ivoire and the DRC.

40 See UNIOGBIS, S/RES/2030 (2011), para. 6. Only explicitly mandated tasks were included in the analysis.

41 United Nations, Report of the High-level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (HIPPO), 2015, para. 174. An exception is one mandate for MONUSCO, which called for the establishment of a vetted and equipped rapid reaction force within the FARDC before training was conducted to enable its takeover of security responsibilities. S/RES/2098 (2013), para. 14.

42 See UN Security Council Resolution S/RES/2008 (2011).

43 Another exception is UNSOM, which has a DSR team under its SSR section. For more on this, see DCAF, *Enhancing Multilateral Support for Security Sector Reform: A Mapping study covering the United Nations, the African Union, the European Union and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe* (2018), p. 48.

44 UN Security Council resolution 2151 (2014), para. 15(d).

45 Overall, a total of 216 DSR-related activities were identified in the Secretary-General reports on PKOs and 129 DSR-related activities were identified in the reports on SPMs.

46 Political engagement in the area of DSR in Timor-Leste and Côte d'Ivoire represents less than 10% of the overall support in this area.

47 For instance, in Darfur, DSR support has been limited to supporting cross-cutting issues within the armed forces, such as respect for human rights or the need to improve strategies for HIV/AIDS prevention. Finally, the reports analysed on UNMIK (Kosovo) and MINUSTAH (Haiti) do not mention any DSR activity carried out by the respective PKOs. This corresponds to the fact that both missions do not have a specific DSR or broad specific SSR mandate under which DSR support could fall.

48 See UNAMID, S/2010/543, para. 42; and MINUSCA, S/2015/918, para. 54.

49 See UNMIT, S/2009/504, para. 51; MONUSCO, S/2014/157, para. 47; and MONUSCO, S/2013/757, para. 8.

50 For example, as mandated, UNAMA has mainly been tasked with providing political support in coordinating DSR.

51 See UNMIT, S/2010/522, para. 27.

52 See MINUSCA, S/2015/576, para. 60.

53 See MINUSCA, S/2015/227, para. 52.

54 See UNOWA, S/2012/510, para. 50; and UNSOM, S/2015/702, para. 30.

55 See UNOCI, S/2015/320, para. 3; UNMIT, S/2009/504, para. 25; UNMIT, S/2012/43, para. 29; and BNUB, S/2013/36, para. 19.

56 See BINUCA, S/2011/739, para. 40.

57 See MONUSCO, S/2014/956, para. 13; and MONUSCO, S/2012/65, para. 54.

58 See UNOCI, S/2015/320, para. 35.

59 See UNMISS, S/2013/651, para. 28. For PKOs, half the activities identified in the area of governance and oversight involved the provision of training.

60 For instance, training armed forces prosecutors and judges in military law (see UNMISS, S/2012/820, para. 51) or activities at the operational level (e.g., the establishment of prosecution support cells to strengthen the capacity of military prosecutors, see MONUC, S/2009/472, para. 37).

61 See UNOCI, S/2008/451, para. 15; MINUSCA, S/2015/576, para. 61; MINUSCA, S/2015/918 para. 53; and MINUSCA, S/2014/857, para. 54.

62 For instance, MINUSCA was the only mission for which reporting referenced the provision of technical assistance in the verification of armed forces personnel through the establishment of a human resources management database.

63 See BNUB, S/2013/104, para. 57; and BNUB, S/2014/36, para. 22.

64 See UNAMA, S/2008/617, para. 23.

65 See UNSMIL, S/2013/516, para. 67.

66 See UNIOGBIS, S/2013/262, para. 38.

67 See UNSMIL, S/2015/144, para. 64.

68 The DSR Questionnaires sent to field missions in 2017 as part of DPKO's DSR review indicated that reviews and assessments of the defence sector may take place. However, this study has only considered defence sector reviews as DSR support when missions have performed the review jointly with or in support of the host government.

69 In the context of A4P, the Secretary-General has committed to reporting "using a comprehensive analysis with frank and realistic recommendations, to propose parameters for the sequencing and prioritization of mandates, and to enhance measures to share the findings of Secretary-General-commissioned reviews and special investigations, as appropriate." See: A4P Declaration, para. 6.

70 Similarly, while strengthening budget management appears vital to DSR, as emphasized in the DSR Policy, just three references to support for budgeting processes or expenditure reviews were found in reporting of the Secretary-General related to DSR. Nonetheless, while not covered by this research, public expenditure reviews covering the broader security sector have covered the defence sector and have put forth specific recommendations for the DSR process, including, for instance, to help with downsizing the army in CAR through a retirement scheme.

71 For instance, the Secretary-General's report on BNUB (2/2013/36) includes a table of benchmarks in the Annex, including the benchmark "a strengthening and sustainable security structure enabling Burundi to respond effectively to domestic and international security concerns while respecting global norms and rights". The benchmark integrates indicators of progress on rightsizing and professionalization of the armed forces.

72 There is a need to explore whether this may or may not be partly linked to some UN actors having a different understanding of how their work relates to DSR.

73 While MINUSTAH and UNMIK do not have an explicit mandate for DSR, they have been included in this study because their SSR mandates provide an umbrella for DSR support.

74 While UNSOM, UNAMI, UNIPSIL, UNIOSIL, BNUB, BINUCA, and UNOTIL do not have an explicit mandate for DSR support, they have been included in this study because their SSR mandates provide an umbrella for DSR support.

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