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

Policy Paper – №14

The Post-Conflict Security Sector

David M. Law

Geneva, June 2006

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ARMED FORCES (DCAF)**

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About the Author

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Recent writings include *Security Sector Reform and the Future of the Code of Conduct, Post-Conflict Reconstruction of the Security Sector, Human Security and Security Sector Reform, Security Sector Reform in the Euro-Atlantic Region, Security Sector Education and Training: requirements and priorities for the second reform decade, Transparency and Accountability in Security Sector Reform, 9/11 and the Global Democratic Revolution.*

Prior to joining DCAF in October 2003, David Law worked as a manager/consultant in capacity-building and technical assistance projects sponsored by the European Commission and the Canadian government. He also lectured on security issues at various universities in Europe and North America. From 1984-94, David was a member of NATO's international staff, where he worked as a policy analyst and principal advisor to three Secretaries-General. Before joining NATO, he was associated with non-governmental organizations active in inter-parliamentary cooperation, adult education, development, youth work and refugee resettlement.

DCAF Policy Papers offer debate and policy recommendations on issues of security governance. These works are commissioned by DCAF.

Table of Contents

Abstract

This essay draws on a recent study of how the international community has dealt with the need to construct or reconstruct the security sector in six countries where there has been severe conflict leading to significant international engagement. Various factors are identified as having been critical in shaping the outcome of (re)construction efforts, and they are evaluated from several perspectives. The author observes that external actors have tended to take a limited and unbalanced approach to the security sector, focusing on building the efficiency of statutory security actors, and neglecting the development of managerial and governance capacity. He concludes that while programmes tended to become more effective after the first major post-Cold War effort was undertaken in Haiti in 1994, the plight of the reconstruction effort in Afghanistan after 2001 may point to a reversal of this trend.

The Post-Conflict Security Sector[1]

David M. Law[2]

1.   Introduction

Security sector reform departs from the notion that security and development are interdependent – the concept that without security, development cannot not be secured; and that without development, neither can social peace, democratisation and justice. Beyond that, there are several different approaches to security sector reform. There are differences in how the security sector is defined, how its reform is conceptualised and how this relates to the overall state of governance in a given theatre. In its broadest understanding[3] security sector reform has three facets. One is that the approach to the security sector has to be comprehensive in nature, taking into account the main actors of the security sector and their functions; namely, all jurisdictions with a capacity to use force, both statutory and non-statutory; the authorities involved in their management; the parliamentary and judicial bodies that oversee them; and the civil society organisations that monitor, research, publicise and propagate ideas about the security sector. A second element is that security actors must be able to operate efficiently and cost-effectively. Third, there is the requirement for the security sector to be subject to democratic control: a security sector that operates in an environment where there is insufficient and inadequate oversight, and governance is weak will not be able to serve the population effectively. Such a comprehensive approach also recognises the need to take into account the transnational, regional and international dimensions of a country's security, and the need to secure the necessary interfaces with extra-domestic institutions and actors.

In some of the more recent literature on security sector reform, security sector programmes are differentiated as a function of whether they are undertaken in developing, transition or developed countries.[4]

This article assumes that the advent of large-scale violence creates a fourth policy environment that differs significantly from those where there has been little or no legacy of large-scale violence.

The raw material for this inquiry is provided by a recent study of how the international community has approached the security sector in six developing and transition countries where there has been severe conflict that has led to a significant international engagement.

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[1] A shorter version of this article entitled "Conclusion: Security Sector (Re)Construction in Post-Conflict Settings" appeared in Michael Brzoska and David M. Law, editors, "Security Sector Reconstruction and Reform in Peace Support Operations", *International Peacekeeping* (Special Edition), volume 13, Number 1, March 2006, pp.111-123.
[2] This article has been prepared with the assistance of Oksana Myshlovska and James Stocker, research assistants working with David Law at the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces.
[3] For a discussion of the broad and narrow interpretations of the security sector, see David Law, 'Human Security and Security Sector Reform: Contrasts and Communalities', Security and Peace, No.1, 2005, pp.14-20.
[4] The experience of the countries chosen for this study suggests that one can also differentiate between post-conflict situations in which a security sector has to be reconstructed, and those where it has to be built from scratch, as in a new country – hence, the reference to security sector (re)construction in the title of this article.

The six case studies – Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Haiti, Kosovo, Sierra Leone, and Timor-Leste – are broadly representative of the some 50 post-conflict environments with which the international community has had to contend during the past decade and a half. Accordingly, they can generate some valid observations about donor policies towards such settings that may be generally applicable, in particular about such questions as how effective have been the approaches to the security sector undertaken by the international community in these post-conflict situations and what explains their relative success or failure.

This paper is structured in the following way. In the next section, I will address how the approach taken to the security sector in post-conflict countries compares with (re)construction efforts in non-conflict countries. I will then address the comparability of the six country settings on which this volume has focused. This will be followed by an attempt to evaluate the success of the (re)construction programmes from the point of view of a number of criteria that seem important and for which data are generally available. The concluding section will look at some of the lessons that emerge from these six post-conflict experiences.

2.   Characteristics of the Post-Conflict Security Sector

The environment that external actors have to deal with in post-conflict settings differs in several respects from what they encounter in non-conflict situations.

First and foremost, there is the need in post-conflict situations to focus on security provision as a top priority and a necessary pre-condition for the successful implementation of security sector programmes. The reality on the ground is such, however, that the necessary pacification is unlikely to be achieved throughout the entire country at the same time. Practitioners thus tend to be confronted with parallel systems where security sector programmes in pacified areas have to be pursued in tandem with attempts to put an end to the violence in conflict zones and to draw combatants into an emerging nation-wide consensus on rules for the use of force.

Second, in the post-conflict environment, security sector restructuring generally has to proceed before there can be any legitimisation of the process through an electoral process. In non-conflict countries, the process tends to follow democratic elections that give a certain legitimacy to the reform effort.

Third, security sector programmes in post-conflict situations usually grow out of peace support operations and are therefore likely to be dominated by donor countries that have also been involved in the conflict environment as providers of military forces. The foreign presence normally has a strong military element and a weak civilian one, reflecting the continuing need to address the security situation as (re)construction efforts come underway, as well as the fact that the military are more capable of delivering programmes designed to build up or reorganise armed forces and more accustomed to operating in violence-ridden areas. The important role of the military in the initial intervention may also mean that defence-capacity building projects will be given priority over the (re)construction of other security sector actors or capacity-building in the legislative or judicial areas as donor programmes unfold.

Fourth, in post-conflict situations, the responsibilities of those intervening in the country can prove to be extremely far-reaching. The security sector may have collapsed or may be characterised by two or more competing jurisdictions. Much of the statal, social and civil infrastructure is likely to have been destroyed. Local elites may have seen their ranks thinned; they may have been sorely compromised by their role in the hostilities; they may still be in opposition. The context tends to be one of little rule of law and no democracy. There may be fierce resistance to efforts to establish or to re-establish a state monopoly of security. Intervening countries may therefore have to act as an ersatz-administration, not only providing security but also attending to the broader functions of government while local capacities are being developed. This may complicate and delay the process of securing local ownership and holding credible elections.

Fifth, in post-conflict situations, donor agendas need to focus on issues that are rarely pursued in security sector programmes in non-conflict environments; for example, disarmament of combatants, confiscation of weaponry, mine action, confidence-building measures, reintegration of former guerrilla armies into the statutory security sector or civilian life, and child soldier demobilisation and their return to their families and communities. Such activities require special skill sets and experience that may not be readily available to ministerial departments, international organisations and NGOs accustomed to dealing with security sector reform issues in a more or less peaceful context where there is a consensus on the need for democratisation.

Sixth, the desired outcomes of security sector programmes in these different environments can also differ. For example, in post-conflict settings, the onus is initially not on building national institutions but on creating the conditions that will make this possible, whereas in non-conflict environments, institutional questions tend to dominate programmes from the outset of the donor intervention in the security sector. Donor programmes in post-conflict environments may prioritise the pacification of the country and the implementation of measures designed to ensure that it does not revert to conflict. They may consider their assignment completed once these goals appear to have been reached. Donor fatigue is a great danger here, given the high-risk responsibilities that external actors have to assume in post-conflict environments. Donor engagements in non-conflict transition countries, on the other hand, will more readily embrace broader institutional objectives as part of a wider programme of democratisation and regional integration.

Nevertheless, despite the very important distinctions, even in the early, and therefore pre-institutional, post-conflict phase where intervention activities will be quite unlike those in non-conflict environments, donor countries need to follow the same basic principles as they do in non-conflict environments. Their analysis of what has to be done in the security sector needs to be based on a comprehensive understanding of its characteristics, procedures and interactions. They need to be able to ensure that the security forces – whether they are domestic or foreign – can provide the necessary security. They need to ensure that the population has confidence in the actions of the security forces, for if this is lacking they will not be able to operate efficiently and will fail in their mission to provide security. As part of this process, they need to engage local authorities as soon as practically possible.[5]

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[5] Bernard Kouchner has been quoted as saying that when he was UNMIK SRSG in Kosovo, he had three main pre-occupations in the immediate post-conflict phase: to re-establish a safe and secure environment for the population, to ensure that their dignity was fully respected and to involve the local authorities from all sides, even if they were only self-proclaimed leaders and did not yet have an elected mandate, in the preparatory work leading up to a decision – in other words, no formal

3.   Comparing Post-Conflict Environments

The six post-conflict situations that provide the case-studies for this article cover a wide range of circumstances. Three of the countries that have been reviewed are 'old' states and experienced an extended period of sovereignty prior to the advent of the conflicts that occasioned international intervention and the subsequent effort to reform or (re)construct the security sector. Modern Afghanistan can trace its roots to the last quarter of the eighteenth century; Haiti to the beginning of the nineteenth; and Sierra Leone to the 1960s when some two dozen new states emerged in post-colonial Africa. The three other states in this study – Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, and Timor-Leste – were either very young, formative states when they became engulfed in violence or did not exist as sovereign states prior to the conflict situation that set the stage for the involvement of the international community. Here a further distinction can be made between Bosnia and Herzegovina (hereafter Bosnia) and Timor-Leste, where international intervention has largely shaped these entities' emerging statehoods, and Kosovo, a UN protectorate whose status remains subject to much controversy and uncertainty.

The differences in terms of levels and patterns of violence in the six countries are such as to raise the question of whether it is justified to group them together for joint analysis. The civil wars which these countries experienced were all extremely brutal and long. In some theatres – Afghanistan and Haiti in particular – the violence has not yet subsided, and many parts of both countries remain insecure. On a smaller scale, violence has continued in Sierra Leone, and there have been outbursts of serious trouble in Kosovo. One could argue that the six case studies fall into two distinct groups: one of post-conflict countries where, with the intervention of the international community, there has been a significant decrease in serious violence; and one of conflict countries where the international intervention has failed to bring large-scale violence under control. I have, however, elected to treat all six case studies as one group, focusing on such common points as the need to reconstruct or construct a local security sector and the willingness of the international community to support this process – however successful or ineffectual the effort has proved to be.

Despite their very different backgrounds, these countries have several factors in common (see table 1 below). They were all very poor prior to the emergence of full-scale conflict. Even Bosnia, relatively well-off by the standards of this group, was a recipient of development aid during communist times. Economic underdevelopment invariably went hand in hand with political underdevelopment, a correlation that will surprise no one. In none of these environments was there a functioning democratic system prior to their descent into conflict. Instead, grossly unrepresentative and corrupt governance tended to be the norm. In some environments, as in Timor-Leste, local elites had little or no opportunity to participate in any decision-making for their community, whereas in others there tended to only be opportunities for those prepared to accept the ideology of state.

Political underdevelopment was naturally reflected in the state of the pre-conflict security sector. Individual security sector jurisdictions were, as a rule, fierce competitors for scarce

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association with the decision making process in the initial phase but involvement in dialogue and in a process over which they would progressively assume ownership. Bernard Kouchner, Lecture in Paris, 29 Nov. 2004 (referred to with his office's permission).

Table 1. **Characteristics of conflict settings prior to international intervention**[6]

Country	Haiti	Bosnia	Kosovo	Timor-Leste	Sierra Leone	Afghanistan
population in millions (2004)	8.1	4.0	2.0	1.0	6.2	29.9
pre-conflict GDP based on PPP *per capita* (USD)[7]	1,651 (1990)	1,315 (1991)	400 (1995)	374 (1993)	469 (1999)	800 (1996)
main pre-conflict pathologies	dictatorship and foreign occupation	communist rule and domination by centre	communist rule, including suppression of autonomy	foreign rule and domination by centre	autocratic government and civil war	communist rule, ethnic and ideological divisions
conflict start	1991	1992	1998	1991	1999	1979
civilian deaths and displaced persons	3,000-5,000 300,000 DPs	130,000-150,000 1,250,000 DPs	5,000-12,000 800,000 DPs	100,000 - 200,000 250,000-300,000 DPs	75,000 280,000 DPs	1,000,000 600,000 DPs
intervention start	1994	1995	1999	1999	1999	2001 (US-led)

resources. They tended to be seen by the population as security threats in their own right rather than as providers of security. They were rarely controlled by representative institutions or governed by a robust judicial framework, and barely subject to effective monitoring by the media. Often, the security sector, as it existed, was managed by an elite that saw its interest as controlling, not protecting, the population.

Almost all of the countries in this study had suffered either invasion and long-lasting occupation by foreign powers, or were under the tutelage of a larger community in the lead-up to the conflict. Haiti is a partial exception in that it was not under foreign domination directly before the conflict that brought international intervention in 1994. It was, however, under US occupation from 1915 to 1934.

The conflict environments under consideration have all been seen to be of strategic significance to the international community or at least to a group of donor countries. Thus, in 1994 the dysfunctional security situation in Haiti touched a nerve in three countries – the US, Canada and France – which were to become the most involved in efforts to stabilise and restructure the security sector. In Bosnia and Kosovo, it was concern about regional

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[6] Information in this table is taken from the case studies as well as James Dobbins, Seth G. Jones, Keith Crane, Andrew Rathmall, Brett Steele, Richard Teltschik and Anga Timilsina, *The UN's Role in Nation-Building. From the Congo to Iraq*, Santa Monica: Rand Corporation, 2005. The data on pre-conflict GDP for Bosnia, Haiti and Sierra Leone is from the IMF's database *World Economic Outlook,* at www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2004/02/data/index.htm; for Kosovo – World Bank, *Kosovo Economic Memorandum*, 18 May 2004; for Timor-Leste – United Nations Development Programme, *Timor-Leste National Human Development Report 2002*, UNDP, 2002, p.22; and for Afghanistan – *The World Factbook 1997*, accessed at www.umsl.edu/services/govdocs/wofact97/4.htm

[7] The data in this table is from diverse sources and it has not always been possible to identify in what kind of dollars.

stability and the overall prospects for continuing democratisation in post-communist Europe among NATO allies and partners and EU members that led to the intervention efforts there. In Sierra Leone, the issue was that of preventing further and deepening instability in an already fragile West Africa, an issue of particular importance to the former colonial power, Great Britain. In Timor-Leste, in addition to preoccupations about the humanitarian situation in the enclave, there was concern about how the issue of its status and viability as a state entity might impact on the fledgling democratisation process underway in Indonesia. Here Australia's security interests were strongly engaged. Finally, in Afghanistan, where it has been the United States and its NATO allies that have led the international involvement, it was preoccupation about the influence in the country of terrorist elements that propelled the external actors into action.

Thus, there is a substantial degree of comparability across these post-conflict settings, as the data in the table below further substantiates.

4.   Comparing External Actors' Security Sector (Re)construction Efforts

The outcome of programmes to effect change within the security sector would seem to largely depend on four considerations relating to the role of international actors.

1.   Were the internationals seen as having a legitimate right to enter the country, use force and pursue their agenda for change in the security sector? Were they seen to be politically and materially capable of carrying out their mission?

2.   Did they have a strategic plan to guide their efforts?

3.   Did they have the necessary leadership structures and organisational approaches to support the implementation of their strategy? and

4.   Were they prepared to invest sufficient manpower and money into their programmes?

These considerations are discussed below under the headings of legitimacy and credibility, strategy, leadership and organisation, and resources.

Legitimacy and Credibility

The issue of legitimacy is important from several vantage points. To be successful, security sector programmes need the support of the public and leadership in the key donor countries, in countries lending political or material support to the donor programmes and in the country of intervention. In all interventions examined in this study, the internationals have had the advantage of operating under a mandate of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), which has generally been viewed as legitimising the action.[8] The

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[8] A partial exception concerns the action in Kosovo where the enabling mandate was only forthcoming after military action had been initiated against the former Yugoslavia by the NATO-led coalition. While the P5 disagreed on the provision of a mandate, military action was supported by 12 of the then 15 members of the Security Council, as well as the UN Secretary

importance of the UN mandate has been underscored by studies showing that interventions enjoying such a mandate, or at least that of a regional organisation, have tended to evolve more successfully than those that have not.[9]

The legitimacy issue is, however, more complicated than this observation would suggest. First, there are the increasingly debated questions about the UNSC's status and representativity. The UNSC is not a particularly democratic body, and the effects of its decisions on people's rights are not subject to any type of judicial review – contrary to the basic philosophy of security sector governance. Second, in five out of the six conflict settings considered in this study, in all but (arguably) Timor-Leste, the intervening states included those that had played a role in the pre-conflict colonial history (the US and France in Haiti, Great Britain in Sierra Leone), or were identified with one of the sides in the conflict phase (NATO and the US in Bosnia and Kosovo). Information that would allow for a quantification of the impact of these factors on the interveners' efforts to stabilise and rebuild is not available. But it is a fair assumption that such historical links have coloured the perceptions of certain segments of the population about the legitimacy of (re) construction efforts.

The credibility issue is closely related to that of legitimacy and again involves some subjective judgements. What concerns us here is whether the international donors have been perceived as possessing the material and intellectual capacity for the reform or reconstruction process, in-country, regionally and within the broader community involved. There are several components to this. One concerns the capacity of the intervening force to make available the resources necessary to mount sustainable programmes of conflict suppression and security sector (re)structuring, both of which demand considerable support. For this reason, an operation that the UN leads, organises and finances tends to lend itself to only a limited conflict theatre where the requirements for post-conflict (re)construction are relatively modest. But if a robust resource base is normally a precondition for a successful intervention, it is far from a sufficient one. In Haiti, the three leading countries involved in the decade-long effort to put this beleaguered country back on its feet – the United States, France and Canada – all belong to the G8. The results of this effort have left much to be desired.

Enjoying credibility among the local population is also about past performance. Any future intervention led by the United States or France in the Caribbean is likely to be associated with their unimpressive efforts in Haiti. Similarly, the UN's failings in leadership and efficiency in settings such as Timor-Leste may taint similar operations in that region in future.[10]

General. See the discussion in David Law, 'With the UN whenever Possible; without when Necessary?', David Haglund (ed.), *New NATO, New Century: Canada, the United States, and the future of the Atlantic Alliance*, Kingston: Queen's Centre for International Relations, 2000. The legitimacy issue has also been highlighted by the controversy over the US-led intervention in Iraq and the lack of an enabling mandate for the invasion and use of force in that country, and the belated UN resolution supporting the reconstruction plan.

[9] See, for example, the article by Robert Cooper and Mats Berdal, 'Outside intervention in Ethnic Conflicts', *Survival*, Spring 1993, on the track record of interventions during the Cold War, with their admittedly more limited ambitions and less intrusive programmes.

[10] The difficulties that the US has encountered in Iraq points to the fact that significant numbers of the population see neither legitimacy nor credibility in the American effort. The previous history of US involvement and intervention in the region is partially responsible for this.

Strategy

Here the issue is whether security sector (re)construction activities have been guided by a mission plan, whether the plan has proved to be effective – and in particular, whether it has embraced all those aspects of the security sector that needed to be addressed. The verdict for the six environments examined in this study is mixed.

In Haiti, during the first UN-sanctioned operation, the rationale for the intervention was the need to reinstate the democratically-elected and undemocratically-removed president. Security sector reconstruction had as its centrepiece the disbanding of the army. In itself not a misguided idea, it was not accompanied by a sustained programme for disarming and demobilising the military forces and reintegrating them into the newly-established police forces or into other positions in the economy. As a result, the forces that were not reintegrated have continued to plague efforts to bring peace to the western part of the island.

In Bosnia, international donors have taken a much broader approach to the challenge of institutional change in the security sector. The initial mandates for the intervention provided by the UN and the Dayton Agreement, while far-reaching, focused essentially on measures involving the transition from war to peace, such as the separation of warring forces and their disarmament under the supervision of the NATO-led Implementation Force (IFOR), and the restoration of intra-communal peace with the assistance of the UN-furnished International Police Force, now replaced by an EU force. Neither the UN mandate nor the Dayton Agreement prescribed an overall strategy for transforming the remnants of security sector institutions and practices from the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia into those that would be required by a new post-communist order, where substantial autonomy would rest with its erstwhile constituent parts. As it was, outside efforts to build a new security sector unfolded in three phases: a first phase of conflict termination and pacification; a second phase of institution-building, primarily at the Serbian and Bosniak-Croatian entity levels; and a third phase, where it has become possible to start work on building key, country-wide security sector institutions. No overall strategy for the security sector has, however, driven this process. This is also manifest in the relative lack of attention paid to the soft dimensions of the security sector such as managerial capacity, parliamentary control and judicial oversight. This pattern has been evident elsewhere.

The case of Kosovo has many similarities with that of Bosnia. But while Bosnia's internal regime and external status were essentially settled with the Dayton Agreement, Kosovo's has remained very much unsettled. The resulting confusion about how to deal with the various power groups in Kosovo, in particular the former Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), has probably been the single most important factor explaining why security sector activities in Kosovo have not been subject to an overall plan, and have remained fragmented and incomplete – with serious repercussions, both locally and regionally. The status question has hung over Kosovo since the 1999 war. Its non-resolution has meant that security sector activities have not been able to develop jurisdictions – the military, intelligence and border guards – that would normally be integral to a sovereign state's security sector. The NATO Kosovo Force (KFOR) and the UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) have had to exercise these functions for the protectorate. So while international donors have been able to address

the issue of demobilisation and reintegration of Kosovar rebel groups, as well as the establishment of a local police authority and municipal reform, the question of national security sector institutions has been excluded.

Foreign intervention in Sierra Leone, on the other hand, has been guided by a need to take a comprehensive approach to the security sector since the very beginnings of the international effort to stabilise the country after its civil war. The main reason for this appears to be a sea change in the approach of the UK, the lead country in the reconstruction effort, towards the relationship between development and security, at about the time that it became clear that unsystematic and disjointed approaches to the security sector on the part of development donors had been a recipe for failure. This resulted in the most comprehensive programme thus far in post-conflict security sector (re)construction efforts, supported by a long-term funding effort.

In Timor-Leste, as in Kosovo, the UN was called upon to provide the basic functions of government in an entity that had hitherto not constituted a state, and it was the UN that was in the driving seat when it came to ensuring that there was coherence to the entire intervention effort. This was an opportunity for the UN to show that it could deal with the complexities of state-building in a situation which, unlike Kosovo, has clearly unfolded in this context. It appears, however, to have largely failed to provide a comprehensive strategy for building a viable security sector. The UN's efforts to develop a local police force were ad hoc and devoid of any coherent recipe for institutional development. As for the military dimension, the UN appeared to have shied away from engaging itself here, seemingly because it felt that the enabling mandate was unclear on this issue. This may explain why the challenge of constructing a national Timorese army was mainly approached by bilateral donors – to an extent on an informal basis outside the UN framework. Critically, the UN failed to establish any mechanisms for establishing democratic control of the security sector, despite being responsible for setting up the territory's governance institutions in 1999-2002.
In Afghanistan, consultations among international donors in 2001-02 laid out a comprehensive strategy for security sector reform that involved the military, DDR, the police, the judiciary and the drug trade, whereby each area was assigned to a major donor country. Nonetheless, implementation of this strategy has been plagued by several complications. There have been different interventions, a US-led one and a NATO one, each with a different territorial focus, military capabilities and objectives. The commitment of individual allies to their assigned programmes has, moreover, been uneven. This has created a situation where the United States has felt the need to launch parallel programmes to compensate for what it has seen as the lagging involvement of fellow donors. Afghanis can be forgiven for questioning whether there has been a coherent, overall approach. But here, the issues of insecurity and warlords have tended to tower over all others.

Leadership and Organisation

In the six case studies, intervention has followed three different patterns: the UN as primus inter pares leading the intervention effort, supported by a lead nation or nations – the cases of Haiti, Sierra Leone and Timor-Leste; the UN and one or more regional organisations sharing responsibility for providing the functions of government – the cases of Bosnia and

Kosovo; the UN being involved as a mandatory only – the case of Afghanistan. In four of the six situations, regional organisations have played an important role: the OAS in Haiti and ECOWAS in Sierra Leone prior to the establishment of a more robust effort than they were capable of mounting or managing; NATO, EU and OSCE in Bosnia and Kosovo; NATO in Afghanistan.

A problem common to all these post-conflict environments has been a lack of coherence in the efforts of the various interveners, in large part due to the lack of an overarching decision-making framework. Whichever organisation or country has had the lead in a particular situation, it has not been able to create a platform where all decisions are taken in a transparent manner. It is extremely difficult to ensure accountability under such conditions.

The organisational dilemma presents itself on several levels. Responsibility for security sector issues tends to be shared among international and regional organisations and national administrations, and by department and ministries within them. A culture of communication, cooperation and coordination remains weak both within and across jurisdictions, whether they be national, regional or international, with the result that the efforts of individual actors can lack coherence and even be at cross-purposes with those who should act as their partners. A few governments – the British and the Dutch, in particular – have made notable progress in this area, but these are still exceptions that confirm the rule. Similarly, there has been a growing problem as concerns cooperation between international organisations and the increasing number of non-governmental elements and civil society players involved in post-conflict security sector programmes. NGOs do not always have a place at the decision-making table; sometimes they will elect not to take that place, lest they compromise their operational independence. Then, there are issues specifically related to the role of national donors. One concerns their reluctance to give too much responsibility to international actors, the attitude of the United States in Afghanistan and that of the 'Permanent 5' in Timor-Leste being cases in point. Another dilemma is that individuals assigned to UN- or regionally-led missions may feel more beholden to the entity that has seconded them than to the one responsible for their work in the field.

The result can be a managerial nightmare. Even in Bosnia, where there has arguably been the most developed organisational framework and strongest leadership of all the situations examined in this study, the decision-making environment has tended to be fragmented. Here, one individual has overall control, exercised in an inclusive committee structure that brings together all key actors. At the same time, the involved organisations maintain their own chains of command that are only indirectly responsive to the coordinating framework. The organisational weaknesses exhibited in the external actors' programmes are a manifestation of the still underdeveloped and evolving nature of inter-institutional cooperation, but they are no less an obstacle to effective programme delivery.

Resources

What level of resource investment does effective security sector reform and reconstruction require? There is no rule of thumb here. But a comparison of the financial inputs of international donors into the various post-conflict situations examined in this study shows major variations in the level of effort.

The table below compares input in three critical areas: the peak presence of armed forces, whose involvement is essential if large-scale violence is to be halted; the peak presence of police forces, whose involvement is essential if there is to be a transition to rule of law and safety in the streets, thereby allowing economic growth to resume (police numbers tend to rise as those of the military decrease); and overall levels of investment by the donor community into post-conflict stabilisation and (re)construction, including the security sector. What emerges is that crisis situations in Europe and on its immediate periphery have received substantially more resources than those far removed from it. Deployment of combined military and police manpower into the Bosnian and Kosovo theatres was at least four times higher on a per capita basis than in other settings in this survey. Overall resource outlays there in the second year of intervention were higher by a ratio of almost eight to one. The main reason for this is that both NATO and the EU felt that their primary interests would continue to be threatened if those conflicts were not followed by a rigorous stabilisation and construction effort. The two institutions were, therefore, not only capable but also willing to bring their enormous security and economic assets to bear. As argued above, all six conflict situations in this study have been important for strategic reasons to one or the other external actor or group of such actors. But of the six, only in Bosnia and Kosovo has there been a deep, sustained NATO and EU involvement.

While resource investment is an important indicator of the degree of commitment to (re)construction, this is about much more than resources. For example, it is estimated that in 2004, the amount spent by the US in Iraq was equal to that being spent in all seventeen ongoing UN operations combined, without any noticeable progress in rebuilding the country's security forces to a point where responsibilities could be securely transferred to local jurisdictions.[11]

Table 2. **Comparison of military, police and aid shares**[12]

	Peak military presence per 1,000 inhabitants	Peak police presence per 1,000 inhabitants	Annual *per capita* assistance (over first two years, USD, prices of 2000)
Haiti	4 (1994)	0.13 (1995)	73
Bosnia	19 (1995)	1.16 (2000)	679
Timor-Leste	10 (1999)	1.65 (2002)	233
Kosovo	20 (2000)	2.02 (2001)	526
Sierra Leone	3 (2000)	0.02 (2004)	25
Afghanistan	1 (2004)	0	57

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[11] See Dobbins (see footnote 6 above), which focuses on security provision as opposed to security sector (re)construction.

[12] This table is based on findings in Dobbins (see footnote 6 above), pp.xxii, xxiii and 239.

5.   Assessing the Security Sector (Re)construction Programmes

To assess the effectiveness of the programmes for security sector (re)construction, seven criteria will be discussed: the impact of the (re)construction effort on violence levels, how it has affected GDP, its effect on ethnic relations in the security sector, how it has related to democratisation and local ownership, the extent to which the conflict zones have been able to integrate or re-integrate into their regional environment and the sustainability of the reforms put in place. There are other factors that can put at risk the (re)construction effort, for example a lack of professionalism in the security sector, militarisation, high corruption levels, a tendency to favour informalism as opposed to the rule of law or whether individual security sector actors have developed a practice of cross-jurisdictional cooperation. These items may tell as much or more about the success or failure of the interventions, but information on them is patchy at best.

Violence Levels

Roughly half of all post-conflict situations revert to conflict.[13] In two of the six cases – Afghanistan and Haiti – violence remains a serious problem and has constituted a mounting one in Afghanistan through 2005. The threat of violence is a lesser phenomenon in Kosovo but its potential return is a factor that remains on many donors' agendas. The other three post-conflict environments in this study are generally peaceful but rely in differing degrees on international security forces for the maintenance of law and order.

GDP Growth

As for GDP growth, the picture is also mixed. In Bosnia, Kosovo and Timor-Leste there has been a major reversal of economic prospects since the establishment of the international

Table 3. **GDP, assistance and growth**[14]

	GDP (PPP) in 2004, in USD	annual *per capita* assistance after first two years, in USD	annual growth in *per capita* GDP during first five years after conflict, in percentages
Haiti	1,618	73	1.0
Bosnia	6,589	679	21.3
Kosovo	790 (2003)	526	5.7
Timor-Leste	400	233	7.1
Sierra Leone	592	25	1.9
Afghanistan	800 (2003)	57	3.1 (after 3 years)

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[13] See Paul Collier, V. L. Elliott, Havard Hegre, Anke Hoeffler, Anke, Marta Reynal-Querol and Nicolas Sambanis, *Breaking the Conflict Trap*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003, pp.103-8. On the importance of DDR for preventing the return of conflict, see 'Managing 'Post-conflict' Zones: DDR and Weapons Reduction', *Small Arms Survey 2005 Weapons at War*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005, at www.smallarmssurvey.org/Yearbook%202005/full%20chapters/10%20Post-Conflict.pdf

[14] Uniform data is not available for all six cases and is therefore only provided on an indicative basis. The date used here is taken from Dobbins (see footnote 6 above), S.6 and S.7, pp.xxvii-xxviii; 2004 GDP data was taken from Outlook (see footnote 6 above), for Timor-Leste and Afghanistan - *The CIA World Factbook*, accessed at http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook, and for Kosovo – World Bank, *Kosovo Economic Memorandum*, 18 May 2004.

presence. In the other three environments – Afghanistan, Haiti and Sierra Leone – growth has remained modest or flat. Growth figures are problematic, however. Where there is undoubtedly a correlation between security and growth, it is difficult to measure the relationship with any exactitude. Where there has been post-conflict growth, the concern is to what extent it is conditioned by the foreign presence and whether it can be expected to continue once the foreign presence has wound down. Then there is the question of how weak the economy was at the end of the conflict and just what is counted in GDP.

De-Ethnicisation

In three of the environments in this study – Haiti, Sierra Leone, and Timor-Leste – ethnic- and clan-related issues have not played a central role, although they have not been absent from the local and/or regional scene. At the same time, all three countries have had to deal with the fact that significant groups within the security sector, even if not ethnically based, have remained outside the statutory framework. In the remaining three case studies, ethnicisation has been an issue of cardinal importance. Thus, ethnic minorities have tended not to apply for the places allotted to them in the Kosovo Protection Corps. In Afghanistan, there is a perception that the army is top-heavy in Tajiks, to the disadvantage of the majority Pashtuns. In Bosnia, despite progress, the security sector remains ethnically partitioned.

Local Ownership

Fundamentally important in assessing (re)construction efforts is the issue of domestic involvement in security sector programmes and assumption of control for their operation.

In all the conflict settings under examination, major obstacles have stood in the way of an early or easy transfer to a national authority. Sierra Leone has been arguably the best example of a timely transfer to local ownership, the handover having been completed for all intents and purposes in 2002, three years after the initiation of international involvement. Prior to that, the government had maintained control of the security sector but foreign advisers inside national structures were the drivers of the (re)construction effort. In Bosnia, the entities inherited control over their security sectors from the militias built up during the civil war. There, the major check on local ownership has been the reluctance of entity authorities to give the federal level responsibilities for the security sector. In Kosovo, the tense relationship between Serb and Albanian Kosovars, and the lack of clarity about the province's future status has meant that the security sector remains mainly in the hands of UNMIK and KFOR. In Timor-Leste, a full hand-over did not take place until 2004, three years after the first national elections and two after independence was achieved, before which there was little effort to start building local ownership. Local control continues to suffer from a lack of national cadres, and there is a continuing need for outside support with security functions. In Afghanistan, while many functions were transferred to national control after the first presidential elections in 2004, problems with local ownership remain. For example, it was only after December 2004, when a new Defence Minister was appointed who enjoyed US confidence, that the Minister was treated as full partner in Afghan National Army (ANA) policy planning and implementation. Overall, the national security sector remains weak in terms of statutory forces, civil management capacity and political, public and media oversight, and highly dependent on international forces in an increasingly

precarious security environment. In Haiti, despite the short-lived restoration of a democratically-elected president in 2001, the deficits of earlier security sector programmes, coupled with a continuing legacy of bad governance, have meant that rebel groups remain strong.

External actors have tended to portray the issue of local control as being mainly about the holding of national elections, and the norm has been to hold them within three years of the intervention. In Bosnia, however, national elections took place a year after the intervention amidst considerable controversy. It can be argued that here early elections ensconced ethnic warlords in power, placing a heavy mortgage on subsequent efforts to secure a democratic transition in the country. Alternatively, early elections may have the advantage of encouraging potential forces of resistance to international tutelage to take positions where they are more easily controlled and 'socialised' than if they went underground.

In Kosovo, elections were held in 2001, only two years after the end of the war. Significantly, in the second election for the Kosovo Assembly in 2004, the overwhelming majority of the Serb population boycotted the vote. In Afghanistan, the first elections had a mixed result, with some ethnicities emerging strengthened from the polls and others weakened. Generally, however, the elections bestowed a badly needed degree of legitimacy on the embattled Karzai government.

The question would appear to be less whether a local elite is in control and more about the extent to which local ownership has been popularly legitimised. In Haiti, despite elections, local ownership remained defective. In Bosnia, there is local ownership, but of a kind that tends to perpetuate division along ethnic lines – the situation in Kosovo is similar but more acute. In Afghanistan and Sierra Leone, parts of the security sector remain under foreign control but the cardinal issue is the extent to which local control extends through the entire territory of state and is therefore representative of the polity. In Timor-Leste, national elections appear to have provided a seal of popular legitimatisation.

While the holding of national elections will remain a key factor in confirming that there is a legitimate local authority and therefore one to which local ownership can be safely and responsibly transferred, the potential for abuse of this process is substantial. Organising local elections when conditions demand in key donor countries – irrespective of the preparedness of local forces to hold elections – is likely to remain an ever-present temptation for outsiders, motivated to relinquish their responsibilities before the security sector (re)construction job has really been done.

Regional Integration

The ability of states in conflict to integrate or reintegrate into their regional environments is important from several points of view. In many cases, domestic conflict has evolved as a function of regional conflict, a prime example being Sierra Leone. In Haiti, regional concerns about the country becoming a source of migrants and a conduit for the narcotics trade drove much of the external involvement. In Bosnia and Kosovo, regional integration activities and the interest in membership in NATO and the EU have probably been the single most important factors pushing change in the security sectors, notwithstanding the

fact that for them membership in these bodies remains problematic. ASEAN's refusal to accept Timor-Leste as a member may be significant more for what it says about Indonesian attitudes towards the fledgling state's regional status than the position held by the body's wider membership. On the other hand, the fact that Afghanistan has become a partner country of the OSCE, while a reflection of the interest of much the Euro-Atlantic community in the country's future, is relatively insignificant in comparison with the instability that continues to be injected into the country by regional actors.

Sustainability of the (Re)construction Effort

To what extent are the reforms that have been put in place sustainable? Some experts have argued that reforms will be difficult, if not impossible, to finance locally once the international presence withdraws. For example, in Afghanistan, the expenditures of the armed forces in fiscal year 2004/2005 amount to 25% of the national budget and 57% of the country's projected revenues for the same period. On the other hand, it can be argued that high reliance on donors for resources that are needed to run the state tends to be the norm, certainly in the developing countries represented by four of the six studies here. For instance, the partially conflict-plagued state of Uganda, often touted as one of Africa's 'success stories' during the last two decades, continues to rely on foreign donors to finance 50% of its basic operations.[15] This ratio roughly corresponds to that of Haiti.[16]

6.   Conclusions

Some might argue that is too soon to make a definitive assessment of whether the external actors' post-conflict (re)construction programmes have been a success or a failure. The Allied efforts to reconstruct the security sectors of post-Second World War Germany and Japan were as intrusive and extensive as anything the international community has been involved in since, and there the reconstruction efforts are generally considered to have taken a decade.[17] In this study, only Haiti and Bosnia have been recipients of donor assistance for this length of time. The foreign effort in Haiti has been largely ineffectual, and the country is characterised in many quarters as a failed or a shadow state. Bosnia, for all its continuing travails, can be deemed a success story of sorts, but one that could be called into question if the EU were to lose its footing and the prospect of Bosnia's membership were to fade. Kosovo, though its situation is also complicated by the issue of its final territorial status, seems to be subject to a similar calculus. Sierra Leone and Timor-Leste do not enjoy the same degree of attention from the western community, but barring a major upheaval in their regional circumstances and a significant reduction in outside financial support, they appear headed for a successful transition. Afghanistan, however, bears many of the same trademarks of an unsuccessful effort to reconstruct the security sector as does Haiti. In contrast to the other settings analysed in this study, security sector (re)construction in these two countries has taken place against a background of large-scale violence.

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[15] 'Down, Down, Up and maybe Down', *The Economist*, 2 July 2005.
[16] See 'Feeding Dependency, Starving Democracy: USAID Policies in Haiti', *Grassroots International*, 6 Mar. 1997, at www.grassrootsonline.org/haiti_food_security.html
[17] This point is discussed in James Dobbins, John G. McGinn, Keith Crane, Seth G. Jones, Rollie Lal, Andrew Rathmell, Rachel Swanger, and Anga Timilsina, *America's Role in Nation-Building: From Germany to Iraq*, Santa Monica: RAND, 2003, pp.1-3.

Expectations about the ability of external actors to restore more or less functioning security sectors, where they have long been absent or where they did not exist pre-conflict, need to be tempered by a strong dose of realism. To assume that they can, in half a generation or so, build structures securing the accountability of the security sector, where little or none existed pre-conflict, is unrealistic. Even rudimentary systems of accountability cannot be built in a day – however much donor countries, understandably preoccupied with demonstrating results prior to domestic electoral campaigns, might wish otherwise. But this is not the same thing as saying that all outside interventions are condemned to failure or irrelevance, and even less that all intervention practices are equally effective or ineffective. Beyond that, it seems that even the least successful of the reconstruction efforts have had a beneficial impact on the overall level of human security in countries where they have occurred.
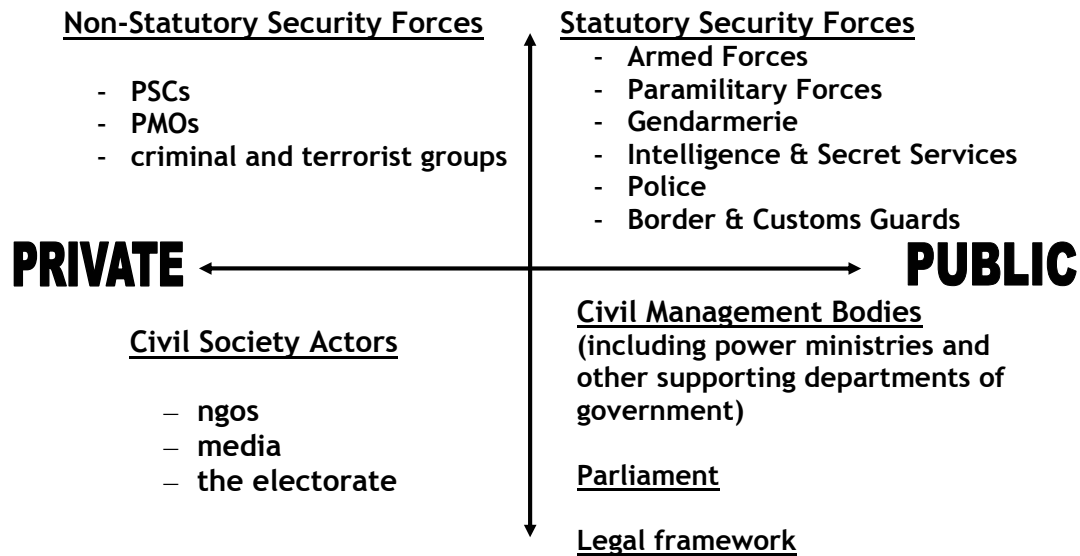
The trend that emerges from this study is that donor plans for the security sector have remained largely limited in scope and unbalanced in their focus. Donor efforts have tended to concentrate on the efficiency of security actors as opposed to their accountability. They have favoured strengthening statutory security sector actors, as opposed to bringing under control the ever more important non-statutory ones. Initiatives to spur the development of institutions motivated by sound values – for example, mechanisms designed to foster democratic control of armed forces – have tended to lag behind structural innovation. Building capacity for the civil management authorities – itself, a lesser priority in the programmes of external actors – has tended to figure more prominently than the building of parliamentary, judicial and civil society institutions capable of overseeing and monitoring the security sector, and keeping it in check. The brunt of foreign intervention has thus fallen on security forces and the public part of the security sector (see the two-right hand quadrants pictured in the graph below) at the expense of private actors, and governance and management bodies.

The potential for the failure of security sector reconstruction programmes is substantial. Haiti and Afghanistan are cases in point. Haiti marks the beginning of larger international efforts to restructure security entities as opposed to only pacifying a security situation out of control. But notwithstanding a decade of international initiatives, the country remains characterised by significant insecurity. The case of Afghanistan is particularly disconcerting as it is the most recent major (re)construction effort prior to that in Iraq. In particular, the resource commitment has been insufficient, and western countries have not been able to intervene in a cohesive manner. The donor strategy for the country, worked out against the background of earlier reconstruction efforts, was a model of comprehensiveness, but its authors have been unable to implement it effectively in the field.[18]

At the same time, the overall pattern has been one of a significant progression in the way that international and national donors have conceptualised their approach to the security environment in post-conflict environments. In the early post-Cold War years, donors were concerned about the need to ensure that militaries would subordinate themselves to responsible, civilian governments. Then, democratic control of the military, in response to

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[18] Similar elements have also been on display in Iraq. Resources are available, but where there has been significant divisions about the rationale for the war among the key donor countries; a comprehensive plan for security sector reconstruction was slow to emerge; and the military was disbanded without a robust DDR strategy. This smacks of the erroneous approach taken by western donors to the armed forces in Haiti ten years earlier – and where the legitimacy issue weighed heavily over the American-led effort.

SECURITY FORCES

Non-Statutory Security Forces

- PSCs
- PMOs
- criminal and terrorist groups

Statutory Security Forces
- Armed Forces
- Paramilitary Forces
- Gendarmerie
- Intelligence & Secret Services
- Police
- Border & Customs Guards

PRIVATE ← → PUBLIC

Civil Society Actors

– ngos
– media
– the electorate

Civil Management Bodies
(including power ministries and other supporting departments of government)

Parliament

Legal framework

GOVERNANCE &
CIVIL MANAGEMENT BODIES

its role as a potential or actual conflict actor, came to the forefront. There was a major shift in the latter part of the 1990s when donors began to look at not just the military but at all actors with a mandate and a capacity to use force, as well as at the bodies whose role it is to manage and oversee such forces and to hold them accountable. The approach to the conflict areas that make up this study have largely paralleled this progression. As we have seen, there was a steady increase in the degree of comprehensiveness of the intervention in the security sector from Haiti in the middle of the last decade to Sierra Leone and Timor-Leste at its end. This was also true of the way external actors conceived their reconstruction programme in Afghanistan, but here, as has been noted, implementation has left much to be desired.

Several recent initiatives have the potential to make an important difference in the way that security sector agendas are approached. In 2001 the OECD launched a major initiative to mainstream the lessons learned by the members of its Development and Cooperation Committee into practical programmes for the security sector.[19] NATO and the EU, despite their bilateral differences, agreed in 2005 to cooperate with the African Union to stem the violence in Darfur. Appointed the same year, the World Bank's new president, Paul Wolfowitz, may encourage greater symmetry in the work of the security and development communities. In 2006, the UN will consider a proposal to establish a Peacebuilding Commission which could help bridge the gap between the UN's traditionally divided peacebuilding and post-conflict activities. These developments hold out the potential to bring major improvements in the way that donors address the security sector in developing countries and, in particular, those that have been racked by serious conflict.

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[19] In support of these efforts, the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces organised a workshop on 'Security Sector Reform: Institutional Approaches', 6 July 2004 with participation by members of the major development and security organisations dealing with security sector issues. See the Security Sector Reform Working Group website at www.dcaf.ch/ssr_wg