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Security Sector Reconstruction and Reform in Peace Support Operations

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Conclusion: Security Sector (Re)Construction in Post-Conflict Settings

DAVID M. LAW

This essay concludes a study of how the international community has approached the security sector in six countries where there has been severe conflict leading to significant international engagement. Various factors are identified as being critical in shaping the outcome of (re)construction efforts, and they are evaluated from several perspectives. 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. While programmes tended to become more effective after the first major post-Cold War effort was undertaken in Haiti in 1994, the situation in Afghanistan may point to a reversal of this trend.

Key words: security sector reform, post-conflict (re-)construction, international intervention; UN; disarmament, demobilization and reintegration; Haiti, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Sierra Leone, Timor-Leste, Afghanistan

This contribution concludes a study of how the international community has approached the security sector in six developing and transition countries where there has been – and in certain instances is still ongoing – severe conflict that has led to a significant international engagement. The six case studies – Haiti, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Sierra Leone, Timor-Leste and Afghanistan – are broadly representative of the some 50 post-conflict environments with which the international community has contended during the past decade and a half.

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.¹ 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 characterized 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. Timor-Leste and Sierra Leone 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 reconstruction in these two countries has taken place against a background of large-scale violence.

Indeed, such are the differences in terms of levels and patterns of violence that it can be questioned whether the six countries deserve to be grouped together for joint analysis. One could argue that the six case studies fall into two distinct groups: a group of post-conflict countries where, with the intervention of the international community, there has been a significant fall in serious violence; and a group of conflict countries where the international intervention has failed to bring large-scale violence under control. I have, however, elected however 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.

In the next section, I compare the approaches taken to the security sector in four areas that appear to be critically important in shaping the outcome of external actors' programmes. I then evaluate the success of the (re)construction programmes for criteria that seem important and for which data are generally available. The concluding section examines some of the lessons that emerge from these six post-conflict experiences.

Comparing External Actors' Security Sector (Re)construction Efforts

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

1. Were the internationals seen as having a legitimate right to enter the country, to 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 organizational approaches to support the implementation of their strategy?
4. Were they prepared to invest sufficient manpower and money into their programmes?

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

Legitimacy and Credibility

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 for 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 UN Security Council (UNSC), which has generally been viewed as legitimizing the action.² 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 representativeness. 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 stabilize 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 wherewithal necessary to mount sustainable programmes of conflict suppression and security sector (re)structuring, both of which demand considerable resources. For this reason, an operation that the UN leads, organizes 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 'country club' of states. As we have seen, 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.³

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 demobilizing the military forces and reintegrating them into the newly-established police forces on 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 and Herzegovina, 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 Dayton 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 and Herzegovina. But while Bosnia's internal regime and external status were essentially settled with the Dayton Agreement, Kosovo's has remained very much up in the air.⁴ The resulting confusion about how to deal with the various power groups in Kosovo, in particular the former 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. KFOR and UNMIK have had to exercise these functions for the protectorate. So while international donors have been able to address the issue of demobilization 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 stabilize 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 2001–2002 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. Afghans 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 Organization

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 organizations 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 organizations 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 Herzegovina 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 organization 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 organizational dilemma presents itself on several levels. Responsibility for security sector issues tends to be shared among international and regional organizations 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 organizations and the increasing number of non-governmental elements and civil society players involved in post-conflict security sector programs. 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 issue 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 and Herzegovina, where there has arguably been the most developed organizational 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 organizations maintain their own chains of command that are only indirectly responsive to the coordinating framework. The organizational 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.

TABLE 1:
COMPARISON OF MILITARY, POLICE AND AID SHARES

	Peak military presence per 1000 inhabitants	Peak police presence per 1000 inhabitants	Annual per capita assistance (over first two years, US\$, at 2000 prices)
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

Source: James Dobbins et al., *America's Role in Nation-Building: From Germany to Iraq*, Santa Monica: RAND, 2003, pp. xxii, xxiii, 239.

Table 1 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 stabilization 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 stabilization 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 United States in Iraq was equal to that being spent in all 17 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.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 that reflect the analysis offered in other

contributions to this study, and for which data are generally available: 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 democratization 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. As pointed out in the introduction to this volume, there are other factors that can put at risk the (re)construction effort, for example a lack of professionalism in the security sector, militarization, 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.⁶ In two of the six cases – Haiti and Afghanistan – violence remains a serious problem and has constituted a mounting one in Afghanistan in the period during which this study has been conducted. 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 areas 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 presence. In the other three environments – Afghanistan, Haiti and Sierra Leone – growth has remained modest or flat (see Table 2). Growth figures are problematic, however. Where there is undoubtedly a correlation between security and growth, it is difficult to measure the relationship with any

TABLE 2:
GDP, ASSISTANCE AND GROWTH

	GDP (PPP) in 2004, in US\$	Ann. per capita assistance after first 2 years (US\$)	Ann. growth per capita GDP in first 5 years after conflict (%)
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)

Source: James Dobbins et al., *America's Role in Nation-Building: From Germany to Iraq*, Santa Monica: RAND, 2003, S.6,7, pp.xxvii–xxviii; 2004 GDP data from IMF's database *World Economic Outlook* (www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/wco/2004/02/data/index.htm); for Timor-Leste and Afghanistan – *The CIA World Factbook* (accessed at www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/); for Kosovo, World Bank, *Kosovo Economic Memorandum*, 18 May 2004.

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 low the economy was at the end of the conflict and just what is counted in GDP.

De-Ethnicization

In three of the environments in this study – Timor-Leste, Haiti, and Sierra Leone – 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, ethnicization 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 assumed 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 hand-over 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 and Herzegovina, 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 Ministry was treated as a full partner in 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 and Herzegovina, however, national elections took place a year after the intervention amidst considerable controversy. It can be argued that this ensconces ethnic warlords in power, placing a heavy mortgage on subsequent efforts to secure a democratic transition in the country. Alternatively, early elections may seem unavoidable and have the advantage of encouraging potential forces of resistance to international tutelage to take positions where they could be more easily controlled and 'socialized' than if they had gone 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 legitimized. 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 rather more acute. In Sierra Leone and Afghanistan, 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 legitimization.

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. Holding local elections when conditions demand in key donor countries – irrespective of the preparedness of local forces to wage elections – is likely to remain an ever-present temptation for outsiders, motivated to relinquish their responsibilities before the security sector (re)construction job has been 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, the prime example in our study 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

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external involvement. In Bosnia and Kosovo, regional integration activities and the drive for 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 problematical. 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 about 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 of 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? In some of our country studies, authors have argued that reforms will be difficult, if not impossible, to finance locally once the international presence draws to a close. For example, in Afghanistan, the expenditure of the armed forces in fiscal year 2004/2005 amount to 25 per cent of the national budget and 57 per cent 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 per cent of its basic operations.⁷ This ratio roughly corresponds to that of Haiti.⁸

Conclusions

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, like Rome, cannot be built in a day – however much donor countries, understandably preoccupied with demonstrating results prior to domestic electoral campaigns, might wish otherwise. But, as this study of security sector reconstruction programmes in post-conflict environments has attempted to show, 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 at the expense of non-statutory 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 characterized by significant insecurity. The case of Afghanistan is particularly disconcerting as it is the most recent major (re)reconstruction effort in our study and the approach to its security sector bears similarities with those adopted in the case of Haiti. Above all, the resource commitment has been insufficient, and western countries have not been able to intervene in a cohesive manner. The donor strategy for Afghanistan, 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.⁹

At the same time, the overall pattern has been one of a significant progression in the way that international and national donors have conceptualized 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 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 all actors with a mandate and a capacity to use force as well as to the bodies whose role it is to manage and oversee such forces and to hold them accountable. 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 into 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 where implementation left much to be desired.

Several promising initiatives have the potential to make an important difference in the way that security sector agendas are approached. In 2005 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.¹⁰ NATO and the EU, despite their bilateral differences, have agreed to cooperate with the African Union to stem the violence

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in Darfur. The World Bank's new president in 2005, 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 wracked by serious conflict.

NOTES

1. This point is discussed in James Dobbins, John G. McGinn, Keith Crane, Seth G. Jones, Rollie Lal, Andrew Rathmel, Rachel Swauger, and Anga Timilsina, *America's Role in Nation-Building: From Germany to Iraq*, Santa Monica: RAND, 2003, pp.1–3.
2. Kosovo was a partial exception. The enabling mandate was only forthcoming after military action had been initiated. See David Law, 'With the UN whenever Possible, without when Necessary?', in 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 lack of an enabling mandate for the invasion of Iraq and the use of force in that country, and the belated UN resolution supporting the reconstruction plan.
3. 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.
4. The integration of security sector programmes and processes into the Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo mandates was politically impossible.
5. See Dobbins (see n.1 above), which focuses on security provision as opposed to security sector (re)construction.
6. See Paul Collier, V.L. Elliott, Harvard Hegre, Anke Hoeffler, Marita 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 (accessed at www.smallarmssurvey.org/Yearbook%202005/full%20chapters/10%20Post-Conflict.pdf).
7. 'Down, Down, Up and maybe Down', *The Economist*, 2 July 2005.
8. See 'Feeding Dependency, Starving Democracy: USAID Policies in Haiti', *Grassroots International*, 6 Mar. 1997 (accessed at www.grassrootsonline.org/haiti_food_security.html).
9. Similar elements have also been on display in Iraq. Resources are available, but there have 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 circeous 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.
10. In support of these efforts, the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces organized a workshop on 'Security Sector Reform: Institutional Approaches', 6 July 2004 with participation by members of the major development and security organizations dealing with security sector issues. See the Security Sector Reform Working Group website at www.dcaf.ch/ssr_wg.