Preparing for a Security Sector Review:

Lessons from Kosovo

By

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About the Project

The Internal Security Sector Review (ISSR) is an analytical process aimed at identifying the development needs of a particular security sector. While it does not implement actual reforms but merely recommends them in the form of a Security Sector Development Programme, the ISSR remains a fundamental initiative for a country interested in reforming its security sector to increase its efficiency, transparency and accountability. The ISSR has been tried and tested around the world and provides for a process rooted in the hopes and concerns of the local population, aiming at long-term stability and sustainability, conscious of the limitations and challenges specific to each country, and encouraging the involvement of the local population while focusing on building the capacity of local authorities.

In the early stage of the project, UNDP's Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR), alongside with the British Department for International Development (DFID), became the first donors to confirm contributions to this project in the amount of respectively US $672,000.00 and GB £200,000.00. Such concrete commitments gave the project the credibility and support it needed to mobilise more interest and further support from other crucial donors and collaborators. UNDP would like to thank the Governments of the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Switzerland and the UNDP Kosovo office for their generous contributions.

About the Publication

This document reports on Jérôme Mellon's involvement in the preparation of the Kosovo ISSR while working as a Programme Analyst for the security sector portfolio of UNDP Kosovo. This involvement spans a twelve-month period, from February 2005 to February 2006. Consequently, this report does not cover the subsequent ISSR implementation phase, expected to last until 31 December 2006.

This post-assignment report, drafted shortly after the end of the author's eighteen-month tenure in Kosovo, is also intended to provide UNDP staff, as well as their United Nations (UN) colleagues and the public in general, with a description of the preparatory work undertaken before the implementation of the ISSR but, more importantly, with lessons learned from such preparatory work.

These lessons learned, drawn directly from the author's field experience, are not provided as instructions or directives but as a practitioner's suggestions and reflections. It is hoped that this report can contribute to the development of good practices and more specifically to the establishment of more proactive and holistic mechanisms in the preparation of security sector reform projects such as the Kosovo ISSR. This report might also prove useful to governments, UN agencies and other nongovernmental organisations in designing security sector reform strategies or programmes. Given the importance of security sector reform projects, especially in post-conflict environments, the preparatory work undertaken before these projects should receive more attention and care, and this report intends on providing actionable suggestions to assist the decision-makers and practitioners alike.

The core of the report lists and describes the tasks, objectives and outputs undertaken as part of the ISSR preparatory phase. Each of these items is then analysed and lessons learned are drawn from them, based on Mr. Jérôme Mellon's specific experience with the Kosovo ISSR process, but with the objective of being relevant and useful for future similar projects. This report also benefited from the input and assistance of BCPR staff members.

CONTENT

Executive Summary

In early 1998, a violent conflict broke out between the Yugoslav Serbian forces in Kosovo and the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) which resulted in one of Europe's worst humanitarian disasters since the Second World War. Approximately 10,000 Kosovo Albanians were killed and another 1.5 million Kosovans were forcebly displaced from their homes to camps within the province or into neighbouring countries.

The Kosovo War ended in June 1999 when a NATO-led military force disrupted the Serbian forces's violent campaign and forced them to withdraw their ground military troops from Kosovo, thus finally ending more than a decade of regional conflict and aggressions. Kosovo's main infrastructures, as well as commercial and civilian buildings, were heavily damaged or completely destroyed, while the population was left deeply scarred by the violent conflict.

The UN Security Council Resolution 1244 of June 1999 established the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), which was given the responsibility to administer and help the rehabilitation and development of the province, and mandated the NATO Kosovo Force (KFOR) to provide security within the territory. Two years later, the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government (PISG) were established with the objective of building local capacities and ensuring gradual transfer of authority back to local institutions.

A sound and holistic security sector reform programme, initiated early after the end of the open conflict in 1999, could have led to the development of a more stable, predictable and sustainable security sector in Kosovo. Instead, and in part due to the unresolved issue of Kosovo's final status, an assortment of projects and initiatives came and went, filling some gaps within the security sector but without an all-encompassing and long-term approach.

In late 2004, discussions were held between local and international authorities regarding Kosovo's security sector and they agreed for the implementation of an ISSR to help assess and design the short- and long-term needs of Kosovo's security sector in an inclusive, participatory and holistic manner.

The ISSR was designed as an analytical process aimed at identifying the development needs of Kosovo's security sector. While it was not intended to implement actual reforms but instead to recommend them in the form of a Security Sector Development Programme, it remains a fundamental initiative for reforming Kosovo's security sector and increasing its efficiency, transparency and accountability. The ISSR approach was fully endorsed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG), the Kosovo President as well as the Kosovo Prime Minister, and it was decided that the ISSR would indeed go ahead.

Such a sensitive and high profile project requires a fair amount of preparatory work. This report intends to describe this preparatory work, its approach and strategies, while drawing conclusions and lessons learned, which could be useful to similar initiatives undertaken in other troubled areas in the future. This report might also prove useful to governments, UN agencies and other nongovernmental organisations in designing security sector reform strategies and programmes. Given the importance of security sector reform projects, especially in post-conflict environments, the preparatory work undertaken should receive more attention and care, and this report intends to provide actionable recommendations for decision-makers and practitioners alike.

Even with an adequate amount of preparation, mistakes cannot be avoided, and unforeseen obstacles often come up at critical times. But investing time, effort and resources in preparing a project such as the ISSR is the best way to ensure a successful implementation.

The Kosovo Context

Kosovo is an autonomous province within Serbia administered by the UN in accordance with the UN Security Council Resolution 1244 adopted on 10 June 1999. The definition of the legal status of Kosovo as a UN protectorate came after a military campaign led by the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and aimed at ending the Kosovo War. The conflict originated after the province of Kosovo was stripped from its autonomy within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and after the majority Albanian community launched a guerrilla war against Yugoslav forces in Kosovo. The guerrilla war, the violent crackdown against Albanians fighters and civilians ordered by Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic, and the 78-day NATO campaign became known as the Kosovo War and is still fresh in the collective memory of today's Kosovo.

While the ultimate executive authority over the administration of the province rests with the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General (SRSG), heading the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), an indigenous government called the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government (PISG) was established and competencies were gradually transferred to its various ministries and institutions to build capacity and develop local ownership. Headed by a Prime Minister and a President, and composed of a parliamentary Kosovo Assembly and fifteen ministries, the PISG has recently entered into negotiations with counterparts from Serbia in order to define a new legal status for the province, to be implemented after the end of the UN interim administration mission. Although these negotiations are seen as a major step in resolving the legal status of Kosovo, pervasive pessimism and frustration among the population have grown over the years in the face of low growth rates, high unemployment, and political and security instability.

Most Kosovans and international officials believe that the poor economic situation is mainly due to the unresolved status of the province, which detracts investors from doing business and investing in the region. The often-volatile security situation, the poor state of its infrastructures, the high levels of pollution, as well as the unreliable production and delivery of electricity, render Kosovo unfriendly to foreign investors in addition to fuelling the impatience and frustration of the local population.

However, great improvements have been achieved in many fields and one of the success stories seems to be the development of the Kosovo Police Service (KPS). Although security is still the ultimate responsibility of the NATO Kosovo Force (KFOR) and of the UNMIK Civilian Police (CivPol), most operational policing and management roles are now the remit of the KPS Kosovan leadership. Along with the PISG Office for Public Safety (OPS) and the Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC), the KPS is at the core of Kosovo's developing security sector.

Unfortunately, the peculiarity of Kosovo's political status and its relatively weak leadership threaten the apparent stability and efficiency of its security sector. While UNMIK still maintains the ultimate authority over the security sector despite the recent establishment of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, it is feared that following the resolution of Kosovo's status, political rivalries and corruption will quickly sabotage the efforts invested in the past seven years to develop a functioning KPS and nascent security sector.

A sound and holistic security sector reform programme, initiated early after the end of the open conflict in 1999, could have led to the development of a more stable, predictable and sustainable security sector in Kosovo. Instead, and in part due to the unresolved issue of Kosovo's final status, a hotchpotch of projects and initiatives came and went, filling some gaps within the security sector but without an all-encompassing and long-term approach. The ISSR was designed to adopt such an approach and to assess the short- and long-term needs of Kosovo's security sector in an inclusive, participatory and holistic manner.

Internal Security Sector Review

In late 2004, the Kosovo SRSG and Head of UNMIK held discussions with British officials regarding Kosovo's security sector and concluded that it would greatly benefit from a strategy on how to further develop an efficient, transparent and accountable security sector in the short- and long-term. Hence, at the request of the SRSG, the British Security Sector Development Advisory Team (SSDAT) was tasked with designing a review process, which would identify the needs of Kosovo's security sector and prepare a development plan aimed at fulfilling these needs.

The SSDAT visited Kosovo at numerous occasions and drafted a report, dated 6 May 2005, recommending the implementation of the ISSR. Based on its extensive experiences in other parts of the world, the SSDAT recommended a twelve-month, eight-Stage approach to this review process:

- During Stage One, a **strategic environment review** would be conducted to determine the environmental features in which security would need to be delivered in the future;

- During Stage Two, a **threat analysis** would be performed to identify and build a consensus on the specific and generic threats to the future security of Kosovo and its citizens, including internal, transnational, social and economic threats;

- During Stage Three, an **internal security policy framework** would be developed to identify which institutions or agencies would be responsible for delivering the capability to counter the threats identified in Stage Two;

- During Stage Four, the **policy framework of the individual institutions or agencies** identified during Stage Three would be drafted to identify the role and capabilities they need to develop so that they can effectively respond to the threats which they are responsible for countering;

- During Stage Five, a **gap analysis** would be conducted to form a valid assessment of the current role and capabilities of the institutions and agencies within the security sector in Kosovo;

- During Stage Six, **development strategies** would be established to bridge the gaps identified in Stage Five;

- During Stage Seven, a **financial assessment** of the ISSR conclusions would be undertaken to ensure that the recommendations for the transformation and development of the security sector are affordable over the long term;

- During Stage Eight, a comprehensive **Security Sector Development Programme** would be put together and the strategy for its implementation would be developed.

The Kosovo ISSR logo developed in early 2006.

This approach was fully endorsed by the SRSG, the Kosovo President and the Kosovo Prime Minister, and it was decided that the ISSR would indeed go ahead. However, implementing a project such as the ISSR required a tremendous amount of preparatory work, which had in fact started several months before the release of the SSDAT final report. The involvement of UNDP in this preparatory work started on 25 February 2005 when the SSDAT met with the UNDP Kosovo Resident Representative and the Programme Analyst for the security sector portfolio.

ISSR Preparatory Work

At the 25 February 2005 meeting and at subsequent meetings with the SSDAT, UNMIK and the PISG, UNDP Kosovo confirmed its willingness to contribute to the preparation and implementation of the ISSR. The overall responsibility of UNDP Kosovo would be to provide the logistical and administrative structural support for the implementation of the ISSR. The role of UNDP would be two-fold:

- Recruit the short- and long-term local and international staff needed to conduct the ISSR;
- Manage the implementation and subcontracting of the various activities required to undertake the eight ISSR Stages, such as community consultations, public opinion surveys, media campaigns, functional reviews and working groups.

It was also agreed that the SSDAT would provide advice and recommendations when needed and when possible, that UNMIK would provide political and strategic support, and that the PISG would provide the institutional home for the ISSR team. In addition, UNMIK and UNDP Kosovo jointly initiated contacts with potential donors to raise funding for the functioning budget of the ISSR process, estimated in July 2005 at US $2.5 million.

An unofficial, *ad hoc* ISSR preparatory working group was thereby formed, composed of the Head and Deputy Head of the UNMIK Advisory Unit on Security (AUS), joined in September 2005 by a Political Affairs Officer, a representative of the UNMIK Office of the Kosovo Protection Corps Coordinator (KPCC), two advisors from the OPS, and the UNDP Kosovo Programme Analyst for the security sector portfolio.

The **main goals** to achieve during the preparatory work period and, concordantly, the objectives of this working group, could be summarised as follows, in no particular order:

1. Secure the **support and participation** of the relevant international and local stakeholders;[1]
2. Draft a detailed **ISSR project budget**;
3. **Mobilise the necessary funds** from interested donors;
4. **Recruit** the best people to lead and manage the implementation of the ISSR process;
5. Prepare the terms of reference and membership list of the **ISSR Steering Committee**;
6. Prepare the terms of reference and membership list of the **ISSR Consultative Group**;
7. Design a working relationship between the ISSR Secretariat and its **local counterpart agency**;
8. Draft a **provisional communications strategy** and liaise with the media on ISSR-related matters;
9. Organise an official and **public launch** of the ISSR process;
10. Complete the preparatory work within the tentative **timeframe**.

While these ten objectives or outputs describe what should have ideally happened ahead of the implementation of the ISSR, the circumstances prevented some of them to be either fully achieved, fully successful, or completed on time.

The next ten sections, corresponding to the ten objectives listed above, describe what happened when trying to achieve them, explain why differences – if any – appeared between intentions and results, and present lessons learned for a future similar project.

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[1] In the context of this report, such form of endorsement by an organisation or an entity characterised by its overt support or active participation in the idea or project it endorses, is referred to as "buy-in".

1. Political Buy-In

Objective: Ahead of the ISSR implementation phase, secure the political support and the active participation of the UN, UNMIK and NATO, of some foreign governments, and of the PISG.

Actual Results: The political buy-in of UNMIK and the SRSG was of prime importance, given their executive authority over the administration of the province. Unfortunately, the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), responsible for overseeing all UN peacekeeping missions, took several weeks to review and approve the ISSR process and approach. Without such approval, the SRSG could hardly endorse the process, despite being unofficially supportive of the idea. Such delay affected the other preparatory tasks and delayed further public discussions on the ISSR. The working group met with representatives of foreign governments in Kosovo and the initial reaction of most of them was fairly positive. The British, Dutch and Swiss governments were the most receptive in committing support to the ISSR process, while most other governments expressed initial support without confirming an actual, concrete commitment. The Kosovo Prime Minister and President were briefed by the SRSG about the ISSR process and expressed their interest and support for the endeavour. Unfortunately, such endorsement seems not to have been stressed strongly enough upon the PISG officials and staff, as the working group kept witnessing lukewarm commitment, slow initiative and reluctant participation of PISG representatives in the ISSR preparatory work.

Explanation: The delay in securing DPKO's approval of the ISSR was apparently caused by the lack of background information DPKO possessed about the principles, approaches, and benefits of security sector reform initiatives in a context such as that of Kosovo. In addition, DPKO discussed in great lengths its concerns with the references, in the project document, to KPC and external defence, leading to their subsequent removal. The absence of stronger and more numerous commitments coming from foreign government officials in Kosovo was apparently caused by the fact that, during meetings with foreign representatives, much of the emphasis was put on the funding aspect of their potential contribution rather than on their political support. In addition, they mentioned that their commitment would be conditional to other governments committing as well so that it would be seen as a multinational support effort rather than as a single-country contribution, thus avoiding the potentially controversial ISSR being branded as the initiative of a sole government. The lukewarm support received from PISG representatives was apparently caused by their failure to recognise the tremendous benefits and opportunities that the ISSR could bring to the PISG in terms of visibility, credibility and capacity building. It seems that PISG officials still could not satisfactorily answer the sempiternal question of "what's in it for me" and that they did not grasp the high return on investment that the ISSR could offer, rendering their political buy-in rather theoretical.

Lessons Learned: In the context of a UN peacekeeping mission, the relevant DPKO officials should be briefed, ideally in person and in New York, to discuss the situation in the field, the particulars of the project, its work plan and its political implications, and to answer questions on the spot rather than by fax or e-mail. To secure the political buy-in of foreign governments, the working group should brief, ideally in person and in the relevant capitals, the diplomatic representatives – to discuss political support – separately from the international aid officials – to discuss financial support. In order to secure local political buy-in, it might be relevant to first secure the endorsement of a foreign government enjoying friendly and close links with the local authorities, such as the American government in the case of Kosovo. Then, meetings and briefings with local government officials should emphasise the benefits that the local government and population would gain from the project. Members of the working group should put themselves in the shoes of the local government officials and find out what is the right combination of benefits and investment that could secure their political buy-in. Otherwise, the project is bound to be shelved among other foreign-borne ideas and initiatives that were not rooted in the needs and desiderata of the local government and population.

2. Project Budget

Objective: Draft a detailed ISSR project budget in order to plan for resource mobilisation, procurement, staff recruitment, and logistics.

Actual Results: The working group could count on the skills and dedication of the KPCC representative to undertake most of the budget-drafting task, in close collaboration with the other working group members, other UNMIK officials, and the SSDAT members, who provided inputs based on their previous experiences. One of the earliest drafts of the budget was discussed on 17 June 2005, roughly a month after the submission of the SSDAT report, and forecasted a need of approximately US $1.1 million, a figure which was shortly after increased to US $2.5 million, and then after several revisions brought back down to a total of US $1.767 million, which is still the figure used today. Despite all the efforts deployed into drafting a solid and detailed ISSR budget, it is only towards the end of the year 2005 that a clear and more definitive version of the budget could be drafted. The most recent ISSR budget dated January 2006 lists a total of 40 budget lines spread over ten general budget categories:

ISSR Secretariat Staff	44%
Temporary Experts	8%
Local Research and Analysis Company	3%
Vehicles Rental and Maintenance	6%
Administration and Office Expenses	6%
Events Management and Expenses	7%
Public Communications	15%
Travel Expenses	5%
Miscellaneous	1%
UNDP General Management Services	5%

Explanation: The difficulty in rapidly drafting a definitive detailed budget was apparently caused by the challenge of identifying the day-to-day needs of this twelve-month project, based on continuously-changing data and unconfirmed commitments. For example, in mid-2005, a brand-new government building was being erected in the capital city of Pristina, and early discussions with the PISG had led to an informal agreement about the ISSR implementation team being housed in these new premises. However, as time passed, the uncertain level of

governmental commitment and the unreliability of the contractor's delivery date led the working group to include a budget line for office rental, office furniture and utilities.

The new Kosovo Government Building, completed in early 2006, now houses the ISSR Secretariat alongside the OPS.

This budget line was then removed when the date of the move into the new building was confirmed and the total budget figure was consequently adjusted downwards. In addition, the definitive size and composition of the ISSR Secretariat had political implications and could not be precisely determined until late in 2005, which also led to budget revisions.

Lessons Learned: Drafting a detailed budget is a very important task and the preparatory working group, and should be initiated as soon as possible, even if it is to be revised later on. Ideally, all the needs should be precisely identified and realistic figures inputted, based on relevant experiences and expertise with a similar project. If any data or information related to the funding needed to implement the project is missing, the budget should be drafted using a worst-case scenario approach, like in the example above where a budget line for office rental was added, even though it was possible that the new government building would provide for the necessary office space.

3. Funding

Objective: In accordance with the draft ISSR budget, mobilise the necessary funds from interested donors. Since the initial objective was to raise US $2.5 million, most donors were approached with this draft figure, while only a small number of donors were approached later, after the total project budget had been almost halved.

Actual Results: For resource mobilisation purposes, the UNDP Kosovo Programme Analyst took the lead in preparing the documentation for and the meetings with the Kosovo donor community. In addition, the UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR), headquartered in New York, was also approached as a potential ISSR donor. As mentioned above, the issue of funding the ISSR was the main focus of most meetings held with representatives of foreign governments. UNMIK and UNDP representatives played the main role in meeting with these officials, detailing the project, presenting the figures, and explaining the work plan. Again, the British, Dutch and Swiss governments were the most receptive in committing financial support to the ISSR process, while most other governments expressed initial support without confirming an actual, concrete commitment. As to BCPR, although informal discussions took place in New York as early as in June 2005, and although the formal request for funding was submitted on 27 July 2005, it is only on 17 October 2005 that UNDP Kosovo received confirmation of BCPR's positive decision. By that time, the preparatory work had suffered serious delays, the credibility of the process had been questioned, and some donors and partners had manifested understandable concerns regarding the long-term viability of the ISSR project. Nevertheless, money and in-kind contributions estimated at US $1,403,160.00[2] could finally be secured, representing close to 80% of the total forecasted ISSR budgetary needs.

Explanation: The damaging delays in securing funding suffered by the ISSR preparatory phase was apparently caused by the fact that many

government officials were reluctant to commit first or alone to any kind of financial support because of the sensitive nature of a high profile, security-related project such as the ISSR. In other words, and as mentioned above, their commitment would be conditional to other governments committing as well so that it would be seen as a multinational support effort rather than as a single-country unilateral contribution, thus avoiding the potentially controversial ISSR being branded as the initiative of a sole government. UNDP Kosovo expected an early confirmation of some financial contribution from BCPR, which would have led other donors to pledge their support to what would have then become a multinational effort. However, the delay in securing early funding commitment from BCPR probably discouraged some donors while delaying the contribution of others. The British Department for International Development (DFID) took a risk in confirming its contribution and becoming the first and potentially sole ISSR donor, followed six days later by BCPR.

Lessons Learned: As discussed above, to secure funding from foreign governments and other organisations, the working group should brief the diplomatic representatives – to discuss political support – separately from the international and aid officials – to discuss financial support. Again, this should be done by travelling to the various capitals and meeting face-to-face with the relevant officials. These visits should not replace meetings with in-country representatives but rather complement them, while at the same time respecting the chain-of-command between the headquarters and the liaison offices. In addition, the resource mobilisation effort should begin as soon as possible after the approval of the project and the drafting of its budget. The importance of securing financial resources early and sufficiently is often overlooked but late or insufficient funding can jeopardise the success of the initiative and render all the preparatory work worthless.

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[2] US $672,840.00 from BCPR (17 October 2005); US $100,000.00 from UNDP Kosovo; GB £200,000.00 from DFID (11 October 2005); approximately EU €70,000 in-kind from the government of The Netherlands (11 November 2005); and approximately US $196,320.00 in-kind from the government of Switzerland (2 December 2005).

4. Staff Recruitment

Objective: Recruit the best people to lead and manage the implementation of the ISSR process. This process was not significantly different from the recruitment process of other UNDP projects but had the particularity of being highly political, since the individuals hired to form the ISSR Secretariat would ultimately be drafting recommendations on the development of Kosovo's future security sector.

Actual Results: The draft terms of reference were provided by the SSDAT, based on its previous experiences and its opinion on the expertise needed, while the working group contributed to their final version. The short-listing of candidates, the interviews, and the final recruitment decisions necessarily had to involve representatives from the three main organisations: UNMIK (AUS), the PISG (OPS) and UNDP. Therefore, one representative from each of these organisations was mandated to take part in each step of the recruitment process. The participation of PISG representatives was one of the few signs of their political buy-in and willingness to be involved in the ISSR project. Unfortunately, some of them failed to grasp certain ISSR overarching neutrality principles and focused on the immediate political gains that their participation could offer, going as far as taking candidates' filial or political affiliations into consideration. During the process, 482 applications were received to fill the core positions. The UNDP Kosovo Programme Analyst and his colleagues were responsible for preparing and publishing the vacancy announcements in printed and electronic media, which usually included the local newspapers and relevant websites, as well as wide distribution by e-mail.

Explanation: The long delay in undertaking and completing the recruitment process was apparently caused, in the first place, by the fact that UNDP considered it too risky to advertise positions for which no funding had yet been secured. Therefore, the beginning of the selection process was closely tied to the resource mobilisation effort, discussed above, which was itself delayed. However, all the documentation and processes had been prepared in advance so that the publication of the vacancy announcements could start immediately after the funding confirmation. Secondly, the ISSR being a highly-sensitive initiative, the PISG showed strong reluctance to the main positions being filled by non-Kosovans. This perspective, although understandable, proved unrealistic given the need for a level of experience and expertise which could not be reasonably found among Kosovo's population. A compromise was then reached when the parties agreed to open only four of the ten positions to both foreigners and Kosovans. Thirdly, the involvement of three organisations in all steps of the recruitment process necessarily tripled the time required to complete the process, especially given the need to continuously coordinate the schedule of three representatives otherwise extremely busy and sometimes absent. In addition, the somehow low quantity of high-quality applications received was apparently caused by the overly limited dissemination of the vacancy announcements.

Lessons Learned: The recruitment process for such a sensitive project needs to involve all relevant parties, even if this complicates or lengthen the process. However, to avoid damaging delays, the three representatives mandated by their respective organisations should be able to dedicate as much of their time as possible to this process. Consequently, it would be wise for these organisations to delegate representatives who have a more flexible or less burdened schedule. In addition, the whole recruitment process – including the various steps, the criteria for short-listing, the form and content of the interviews, the consensus-based decision-making process – should be agreed in advance by all parties. If need be, a written document containing these details could be drafted and signed by the parties. As to the quality level of the applications received, the media used to disseminate the vacancy announcements should be as numerous and wide as possible. Although they were in fact published through the channels commonly used by UNDP Kosovo, it would have been useful to greatly broaden these channels and invest the necessary funds to reach a greater number of skilled applicants.

5. Steering Committee

Objective: Prepare terms of reference and a membership list for the ISSR Steering Committee, and present them to the SRSG for approval. While the ISSR Secretariat would be tasked with implementing the review process, the ISSR Steering Committee would be responsible for directing and monitoring the process. The membership list was probably the most directly political aspect of the ISSR process and had to be drafted with careful consideration for local sensitivities, the political context, the main and most influential actors, and for the international community.

Actual Results: While the AUS took the lead in pursuing this task, it received inputs from the other working group members and from the SSDAT. The task was highly sensitive and the composition of the ISSR Steering Committee had to find an adequate balance between the need to involve all major, most relevant and most influential actors, and the need to maintain the membership small enough to ensure efficiency and possibility of consensus. The AUS drafted the terms of reference with the valuable input of the SSDAT and prepared three options for the SRSG regarding the membership list. The option selected by the SRSG led to the establishment of a 16-member ISSR Steering Committee, which met on 10 October and 18 November 2005, and again on 11 April 2006, and composed of:

- The SRSG as the chairperson;
- The KFOR Commander;
- The Head of UNMIK Pillar I (Police and Justice);
- The Head of UNMIK Pillar III (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE));
- The Head of UNMIK Pillar IV (European Union (EU));
- Six representatives of the Kosovo political establishment, including the opposition;
- Five representatives of Kosovo minority communities.

Explanation: The difficulty in finalising this objective, and more specifically the membership list, was apparently caused by the complexity of the Kosovo political scene and the conflicting interests at play. Kosovo being a UN protectorate with a SRSG holding executive power, an indigenous government with increasing responsibilities, and a known history of bitter political rivalry, drafting a membership list for a committee tasked with overseeing the review of the security sector was a daring challenge.

Lessons Learned: In a post-conflict environment such as in Kosovo, where political parties strive for power and influence and where the security sector still bears an aura of all-powerfulness, the establishment of an ISSR Steering Committee should strike a balance between respecting political sensitivities and ensuring effectiveness. In drafting the three options for the membership list presented to the SRSG, the AUS considered the need for the ISSR Steering Committee to:

- Ensure that the process is conducted in accordance with the principles of transparency, consensus, openness, and inclusiveness;
- Ensure that there is political ownership of the project and its outcomes, including the security sector development programme, by all political parties;
- Ensure that the process meets the expectations of the local population while being affordable and sustainable in the long-term;
- Direct the responsible ministers, agencies, officials or individuals to implement recommendations and changes;
- Support the ISSR Secretariat in its work by providing technical advice and know-how as it discharges its responsibilities;
- Encourage all elements of the local and international communities to participate constructively in the process.

Such principles, although difficult to implement in practice, should ideally guide any decision involving the establishment of an ISSR Steering Committee.

6. Consultative Group

Objective: Prepare the terms of reference and membership list of the ISSR Consultative Group, a network of individuals and organisations which would inform, review and validate each Stage of the ISSR. The ISSR Consultative Group would provide people of Kosovo with an opportunity to voice their hopes and fears related to security and to Kosovo's security sector.

Actual Results: Here again, the AUS took the lead in preparing the terms of reference and membership list of the ISSR Consultative Group, in close collaboration with the OPS, and with frequent input from UNDP Kosovo and other partners such as the OSCE. After numerous discussions, it seemed that the idea of formal terms of reference would not allow for the necessary flexibility and should therefore be replaced by a simpler mission statement. Since it was never intended for all the individuals and organisations of the ISSR Consultative Group to meet all together at regular intervals, the number of members was not limited by physical, logistical or geographical constraints. Therefore, the list of individuals and organisations invited to join the ISSR Consultative Group grew to approximately 140 entries, and was arbitrarily divided into three sub-groups: UNMIK, the PISG, political parties, and the security providers (42%); Ethnic and religious communities (15%); Civil society, the media, and the business community (43%). On 10 November 2005, the preparatory working group, led by the AUS, held a large one-day conference in Pristina to draw together representatives from the ISSR Consultative Group. Opened by the SRSG and the Prime Minister, the conference was a clear success as more than 100 representatives attended the event, taking that opportunity to voice their opinion, hopes and concerns during working group sessions. It was the beginning of the ISSR outreach programme, intended at feeding the process with the expectations and inputs of Kosovans from all segments of society.[3]

The conference could become a reality thanks to the dedication of a team of individuals who believed in the participatory nature of the ISSR process, and benefited from the participation of motivated and expert speakers and moderators.

Explanation: The urgency in securing local ownership and participation led to the organisation of an ISSR Consultative Group conference before the actual start of the ISSR process. The ISSR preparatory working group could not have waited for the recruitment and arrival of the ISSR Secretariat to organise such a conference because other important preparatory steps depended on the ISSR process being formally introduced to the individuals and organisations called upon to participate.

Lessons Learned: The ISSR is a review process aimed at identifying priorities in the development of an accountable, efficient and transparent security sector. In order for such priorities to be rooted in the reality, expectations and practical needs of the local population, a consultative process should be put in place. The hopes and fears of the local population need to feed into the analytical and recommendation process of the ISSR; after all, the local population are the main beneficiary of these recommendations and their opinion cannot be ignored. Consequently, the establishment of a consultative group should be as open and inclusive as possible, and ideally decentralised, to prevent the ISSR process from being focused solely on the needs and concerns of a small region or of a small category of people. An all-inclusive, introductory conference should be organised to draw together as many members as possible, before initiating a series of numerous targeted and focused consultations with much smaller groups. Although the preparation of the terms of reference and membership list of the ISSR Consultative Group should begin during the ISSR preparatory phase, their finalisation and the following outreach campaign should be the responsibility of the ISSR Secretariat during the implementation phase.

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[3] In February 2006, a series of consultations with representatives of all ethnic and religious groups, civil society organisations, municipal administration, and of the police took place throughout Kosovo. The opinions and concerns expressed during these meetings have provided the basis for identifying key ISSR issues and priorities.

7. Local Counterpart Agency

Objective: Design the most appropriate working relationship between the ISSR Secretariat and its local counterparts, the OPS, including reporting lines, hierarchy and staff involvement.

Actual Results: The first attempt at defining this working relationship can be found in an internal UNDP document drafted on 3 May 2005 suggesting that the OPS take upon the "ISSR secretarial role" as another one of its many roles, and that the ISSR budget simply cover for the recruitment of the temporary OPS staff required to undertake the review process. The OPS suggested its own arrangement, followed by counter-suggestions from the working group and from the OPS again, before the matter was finalised and agreed upon through a memorandum of understanding which differ only slightly from the working group's previous one. This memorandum of understanding stated that the ISSR Coordinator would:

- Be responsible to the ISSR Steering Committee for the delivery of the ISSR and report functionally to its chairperson on the management of the ISSR Secretariat, the substance of the review, and the recommendations, briefings and reports;

- Have a reporting relationship with the OPS Director and with UNDP Kosovo, for issues of personal conduct, management, and day-to-day administration;

- Make monthly verbal reports to the OPS Director on the work of the ISSR Secretariat and brief the Director on all significant events pertaining to the review;

- Regularly brief the UNDP Resident Representative on ISSR Secretariat management and personnel matters, and be held accountable for ISSR budget matters;

- Be responsible for the release of any ISSR-related information to the public after having consulted with the OPS Director;

Furthermore, according to the same document, the OPS existing staff would work closely with the ISSR Secretariat advisers and local experts but would maintain their line reporting relationship with the OPS Director and,

as part of the wider capacity-building project within the Office of the Prime Minister, the ISSR Secretariat advisers and local experts would agree on capacity-building, development and work programmes for endorsement by the OPS Director and ISSR Coordinator.

Explanation: The long delay and difficulties in agreeing on a definitive working relationship between the OPS and the ISSR Secretariat was apparently caused by the PISG's approach to the ISSR. The PISG was quick at identifying the capacity-building opportunity for some of its staff in working alongside international experts on issues such as national security, policy drafting and analysis, information gathering, public consultation, organisational development, change management, and security sector reform. However, PISG officials also seemed to have seen in the ISSR Secretariat an opportunity to increase their political influence in the sensitive and still UNMIK-controlled field of security, as well as an opportunity to benefit from the funding that would be poured into the process. This approach driven mainly by PISG's own interests probably caused the delays in agreeing on a satisfactory arrangement and the difficulties in defining the lines of reporting, hierarchy, titles and status.

Lessons Learned: When presenting the ISSR process to the local authorities, a particular emphasis should be put on the unique and invaluable opportunity that such a process represent for them. Indeed, the return on investment is significantly high, especially if the project and budget management, resource mobilisation and logistical issues are not their responsibility. The ISSR preparatory working group should always keep in mind that people, including government officials, often tend to look into such projects with an intention to personally profit, and should therefore present the ISSR is such a way as how it can help their society, government and fellow citizens, while at the same time building their capacity, increasing their skills and developing their career. The design of a working relationship between the ISSR Secretariat and the local counterpart should be based on this dual approach and avoid, at all costs, a self-centred, personal interest-driven approach.

8. Public Communications

Objective: Draft a provisional communications strategy and liaise with the media on ISSR-related matters. The main objectives in doing so were to manage expectations and avoid misconceptions and misinterpretations about the true nature and purpose of the ISSR process.

Actual Results: With the assistance of the UNMIK Division of Public Information (DPI), the working group was able to release ISSR-related information to the public and media ahead of specific events, such as the visits of SSDAT experts to Kosovo. However, no formal communications strategy was designed and liaison with Kosovo's public and media was established on a rather *ad hoc* basis. On most occasions, the AUS took the lead in liaising with the media and preparing press releases. The first notable ISSR public communications event was the 15 June 2005 press conference organised by UNMIK, chaired by the UNMIK Spokesperson, and featuring the Head of AUS, an SSDAT advisor, and the UNDP Kosovo Programme Analyst for the security sector portfolio. This press conference provided an excellent opportunity for the media to become acquainted with the ISSR's purpose and objectives. While many questions tended to focus on the post-ISSR phase and the implementation of the Security Sector Development Programme, several media representatives focused more on the review process, the participatory approach, the involvement of minority communities, the technical aspects, and the ISSR Secretariat composition. The other significant initiative undertaken during the preparatory phase was the publication of the first ISSR Newsletter in mid-December 2005. Designed mainly by the AUS Political Affairs Officer and the UNDP Kosovo Programme Analyst, the two-page newsletter, published in English, Albanian and Serbian, covered the ISSR Consultative Group conference, and briefly introduced the ISSR process, the ISSR Steering Committee, the ISSR Secretariat, and the ISSR Consultative Group.

Explanation: The absence of a formal communications strategy or plan, and the long delay in publishing a first newsletter, was apparently caused by the simple fact that the working group members could not find the time

to engage in these endeavours earlier or in greater depth. In addition, none of the working group members was a communications specialist and despite the invaluable support of the DPI, it would have not been reasonable to expect all the ISSR communications-related work to be added to DPI already heavy workload.

Representatives from KIPRED, AUS, and the OPS at a press conference on 10 November 2005.

In such circumstances, the positive public response and media coverage confirmed the quality of the otherwise modest communications work undertaken by the ISSR preparatory working group.

Lessons Learned: Managing expectations and preventing misinterpretations, rumours and misunderstandings should be a constant priority for the working group when dealing with the public and the media. The buy-in of local government is just as important as that of the population, and without public support, the ISSR cannot be fully successful in assessing its needs, hopes and concerns. Thus, it is extremely important that the working group presents the purpose, objectives and mechanism of the ISSR process through a communications strategy or, at least, through regular press releases and media events. It is also important to adequately brief media representatives, ideally through media conferences, in order to prevent, as much as possible, inaccurate or flawed reporting.

9. Official Launch

Objective: Organise an official and public launch of the ISSR process, immediately before or immediately after the arrival of the ISSR Secretariat and the activation of the ISSR Stage One, to provide information but also to receive opinions, inputs and comments on the ISSR process and Kosovo's security sector as a whole. The launch would serve the dual purpose of informing and being informed, in addition to preparing the ground for the first outreach activities of the ISSR Secretariat.

Actual Results: In May 2005, the Deputy Head of AUS and the UNDP Kosovo Programme Analyst for the security sector portfolio took the lead in drafting a strategy for what they called the "ISSR launch." The vision was first to organise a large ISSR launch conference, inviting all audiences to be thoroughly briefed about the ISSR and, ideally, to share their comments, hopes and fears with respect to the ISSR process and to Kosovo's security sector as a whole. Then, a multitude of small-scale meetings would be organised to brief each audience separately but most importantly, to gather their input in a perhaps more private, comfortable and open setting. The next task therefore involved identifying the audiences to be invited at the initial, all-inclusive, large-scale conference and, later on, at the small-scale individual meetings. The Deputy Head of AUS and the UNDP Kosovo Programme Analyst identified close to 40 groups as distinct audiences for ISSR launch purposes. Each audience group listed was intended to receive the key ISSR messages in addition to more specific, relevant and targeted messages. For example, messages about the role of religious communities in the ISSR process could have been included for dissemination among some audiences (such as the religious communities audience) and not others (such as the NATO and KFOR audience). This whole strategy for the official and public launch of the ISSR process was never implemented. Instead, it was incorporated in the organisation of the 10 November 2005 ISSR Consultative Group conference and of the February 2006 series of individual consultations with representatives of all ethnic, religious, civil society organisations, municipal administration, and of the police.

Explanation: The decision not to go ahead with an official and public launch was apparently caused by the desire to save time and energy, and to avoid a duplication of effort. Although a launch was indeed a good and viable idea, the ISSR timetable had slipped and it rapidly appeared that the ISSR Consultative Group conference and series of consultations would have to take place almost immediately after the beginning of the ISSR process. Therefore, the same audiences would have been invited to two sets of very similar evens inside a short period of time. This was neither reasonable nor practical, and the decision was therefore taken to turn the ISSR Consultative Group conference into the official and public ISSR launch, based – among other things – on the strategy's list of audiences and key messages.

Lessons Learned: Organising an official and public launch is an important step and provides for a good opportunity to reassert the purpose, objectives and key messages of the ISSR. It should be organised immediately before or immediately after the arrival of the ISSR Secretariat and the activation of the ISSR Stage One, and should involve as much media coverage as possible. In addition to providing an opportunity to manage expectations and prevent misinterpretations, misunderstandings and rumours, an ISSR launch can serve as an initial fact-finding or consultation initiative. If the launch consists of a single, large-scale conference, a special session could be organised in the second half of the event, during which the audience could be broken into small working groups for smaller-scale discussions and debates. If the launch consists also of a series of individual meetings with the various audiences, then the key messages stated during the main launching should be repeated, in addition to messages that would be more specific, more relevant and more targeted for each audience met. Finally, if the first ISSR Consultative Group conference is expected to take place shortly after the ISSR launch, the two events should be merged into an ISSR Consultative Group conference officially launching the ISSR process.

10. Timeframe

Objective: Complete the preparatory, pre-Stage One work before the third week of September 2005, i.e. approximately four months after the 6 May 2005 SSDAT report which set out such timeframe.

Actual Results: The ISSR preparatory work concluded on 8 February 2006 with the end of the ISSR Secretariat recruitment process, close to five months later than the target date. The delay in finalising the ISSR preparatory work had many unforeseen consequences, including the Dutch Government urgently deciding to fund Stages One and Two, and subcontracting them to the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) and the Kosovar Institute for Policy Research and Development (KIPRED), to allow for these two Stages to be completed more rapidly. The actual ISSR implementation officially started on 1 January 2006 and is expected to last until 31 December 2006.

Explanation: The long delay in undertaking and completing the ISSR preparatory work was apparently caused, in the first place, by external events and processes affecting the ISSR timetable. The implementation of Kosovo's standards was under review, the comprehensive assessment of Kosovo's situation by UN Special Envoy Kai Eide was underway,[4] UNMIK was in a reorganisation and downsizing phase, and talks on Kosovo's future status were expected to start in early 2006. All these factors put pressure on the ISSR to be delivered within an unrealistic timetable, given the context and resources (or absence thereof). Secondly, all the members of the ISSR preparatory working group were taking part in this group in addition to performing all their other regular duties. Even the KPCC representative and the AUS Political Affairs Officer, who had been assigned more specifically to the ISSR preparatory work by their respective unit, had several other roles and responsibilities. The members of the working group were already putting extra evening and weekend hours into preparing the field for the implementation phase and it simply did not seem to be enough. Thirdly,

the ISSR preparatory working group had no financial resource to do its important work. Until funding was confirmed in October 2005, all the working group's activities and initiatives had to depend on the availability of existing resources within UNMIK, UNDP or PISG, which included printing, transportation, communications, etc. Fourthly, despite all the best intentions, it was difficult to predict the Kosovo donors' response, the Kosovo politicians' attitude, the international community's commitment, etc. Thankfully, the SSDAT could share its expertise and experience, and provide an assessment of the risks and delays that the working group might encounter, but the multiplicity of factors affecting the ISSR preparatory phase caused greater delays than expected.

Lessons Learned: When setting its objectives and timetable for the ISSR preparatory phase, the working group should not only be as realistic as possible but also consider the worst-case scenario. Ideally, the decision to undertake an ISSR should be taken when there is enough time for a proper preparatory phase. In reality, circumstances often dictate such decision, and it might well be that the ISSR would be prepared and implemented in the midst of a wide array of different, parallel processes and projects. In such case, the working group should be as quick as possible in establishing its priorities and in listing them in the proper sequential order. It is not an easy task but individuals such as the SSDAT members and other officers with ISSR experience can make a difference in the preparation of such an important project. In addition, the appointment or recruitment of a full-time ISSR officer should be considered as a prerequisite for a more easily manageable preparatory phase. As a member of the ISSR preparatory working group, this officer could bring stability and continuity in the tasks at hand. Ideally, this officer would also be allocated a budget for preparatory initiatives and activities, in order to ease and speed up the steps required before the ISSR implementation.

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[4] His full report entitled *A Comprehensive Review of the Situation in Kosovo* is available in Annex A of United Nations Security Council, *Letter dated 7 October 2005 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council*, UN S/2005/635, 7 October 2005.

Conclusion

The ISSR is an analytical process aimed at identifying the development needs of a particular security sector. While it does not implement actual reforms but merely recommends them in the form of a Security Sector Development Programme, the ISSR remains a fundamental initiative for a country interested in reforming its security sector to increase its efficiency, transparency and accountability. The ISSR has been tried and tested around the world and provides for a process rooted in the hopes and concerns of the local population, aiming at long-term stability and sustainability, conscious of the limitations and challenges specific to each country, and encouraging the involvement of the local population while focusing on building the capacity of local authorities.

Such a sensitive and high-profile project requires a fair amount of preparatory work to be undertaken ahead of its implementation. This report intended on describing this preparatory work and drawing conclusions and lessons learned from it, which could be useful to similar initiatives undertaken in the future. While this report makes recommendations regarding the various tasks required by the preparation of an ISSR, four overarching suggestions could stem from all of them:

- **Envision the worst-case scenario**: with such a complex initiative, involving various international, regional and local organisations, as well as foreign and domestic political entities, all with their own specific priorities, interests and agendas, it is safer to plan the ISSR preparatory work based on a worst-case and alternative scenarios, whether it be related to political buy-in, resource mobilisation, recruitment, or timeframe;
- **Start early:** all this preparatory work takes a lot of time, and bureaucratic rules and procedures can unexpectedly delay an otherwise simple task, hence the importance to allow for enough time to complete all the necessary preparatory work and to organise the various tasks according to their level of priority;

- **Assemble a motivated, multidisciplinary team:** the key to achieving this preparatory work on time and with success is the composition of a dedicated and talented multidisciplinary working group, functioning well as a team and fully supportive of the ISSR principles of inclusiveness, transparency, participation, sustainability and local ownership;
- **Secure the required funding early**: the implementation of the ISSR cannot rely solely on the existing staff of local and international organisations and therefore requires that financial resources be committed as early as possible to fund the process and, ideally, to provide some seed money for the preparatory working group to undertake activities ahead of the ISSR implementation phase.

The violent riots of March 2004 renewed the concerns many had regarding the security stability in Kosovo.

Mistakes cannot always be avoided, and unforeseen obstacles often come up at critical times, but investing time, effort and resources in preparing a project such as the ISSR is the best way to ensure a successful implementation. As rightly stated by Confucius, "success depends upon previous preparation, and without such preparation there is sure to be failure."

Additional Resources

A more detailed, draft version of this report is available at http://cv.jmellon.com/issr_draft.pdf

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United Nations Development Programme in Kosovo, *Internal Security Sector Review (ISSR): Project Document*, 23 January 2006 (pdf).

United Nations Development Programme in Kosovo, *Memorandum of Understanding between the Office for Public Safety (OPS) and the Internal Security Sector Review Secretariat (ISSRT)*, 9 January 2006 (doc).

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Annex

List of Acronyms

AUS	Advisory Unit on Security (UNMIK)	KPCC	Kosovo Protection Corps Coordinator (UNMIK)
BCPR	Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (UNDP)	KPS	Kosovo Police Service
CivPol	Civilian Police (UN)	NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
DCAF	Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces	OPS	Office for Public Safety (PISG)
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)	OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
DPI	Division of Public Information (UNMIK)	PISG	Provisional Institutions of Self-Government (Kosovo)
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UN)	SRSG	Special Representative of the Secretary-General (UN)
EU	European Union	SSDAT	Security Sector Development Advisory Team (UK)
ISSR	Internal Security Sector Review	UK	United Kingdom
KFOR	Kosovo Force (NATO)	UN	United Nations
KIPRED	Kosovar Institute for Policy Research and Development	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
KPC	Kosovo Protection Corps	UNMIK	United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo

Maps

An International Relations Center map of the Balkans highlighting the province of Kosovo, which shares borders with Serbia (north), Macedonia (south-east), Albania (south-west), and Montenegro (west).

A KPS map showing the thirty Kosovo municipalities divided into six areas for decentralised policing management purposes: Mitrovica (north), Pristina (north-east), Gjilan (east), Ferizaj (south-east), Prizren (south), and Peja (west).

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