

# Security Sector Reform: public-private priorities



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and  
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Rapporteur: John Chapman

**WHAT ARE NATO'S NEXT STEPS ON MISSILE DEFENCE?  
SDA ROUNDTABLE REPORT**

**CONTENTS:**

<u>PROGRAMME OF THE DAY</u>	<u>p. 3</u>
<u>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</u>	<u>p. 4</u>
<u>DEBATE HIGHLIGHTS</u>	<u>p. 5</u>
<u>SESSION 1 – WHAT WILL A THEATRE MISSILE DEFENCE SYSTEM BRING TO NATO?</u>	<u>p. 6</u>
MODERATOR GILES MERRITT	
PANELLISTS SUSAN POND COL. CHRISTOPH DEHERRE INGER BUXTON CHRISTA MEINDERSMA	
<u>SESSION 1 – Q&amp;A</u>	<u>p. 9</u>
<u>SESSION 2 – SHOULD NATO PURSUE A MISSILE SHIELD FOR ITS TERRITORY AND POPULATION BEYOND FORCE PROTECTION?</u>	<u>p. 13</u>
MODERATOR ALAN BRYDEN	
PANELLISTS ANNA LEANDER JAMES CAMERON ALEX MARTIN SIR TOM DUGGIN MARINA CAPARINI	
<u>SESSION 2 – Q&amp;A</u>	<u>p. 17</u>
<u>LIST OF PARTICIPANTS</u>	<u>p. 21</u>
<u>ABOUT THE SDA</u>	<u>p. 24</u>

*PROGRAMME OF THE DAY*

## Security Sector Reform: public-private priorities

### How far does security sector reform still have to go?

Session I  
12:00 – 13:30

Europe's national government aid donor agencies, international organisations and NGOs have promoted the concept and practice of security sector reform (SSR) in post-conflict and post-authoritarian states. How successful have these efforts been, and what problems still need to be addressed?

Moderator: Giles Merritt, Director, Security & Defence Agenda

- § Susan Pond, Head of Partnership for Peace and Cooperation Programmes, Political Affairs and Security Policy, NATO
- § Col. Christoph Deherre, Strategic Planner, Civilian-Military Cell, European Union Military Staff, Council of the EU
- § Inger Buxton, Policy Desk Officer, Unit Crisis Management and Conflict Prevention, European Commission
- § Christa Meindersma, Director Conflict Management, The Hague Centre for Strategic Studies

SDA Member's Lunch - 13:30 – 14:30

### Where do private security companies fit into SSR?

Session II  
14:30 – 16:00

Private security companies offering both military and civil services are becoming involved in a widening range of SSR activities. What has been their contribution to the reform of security institutions and practices? How effective have they been, and do these private security companies pose any challenges to the regulation and ongoing reform of the security sector?

Moderator: Alan Bryden, Deputy Head of Research, Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces

- § Anna Leander, Associate Professor, Department of Intercultural Communication and Management, Copenhagen Business School
- § James Cameron, Associate Director, Control Risks Group
- § Alex Martin, Director, Libra Advisory Group
- § Sir Tom Duggin, Director of New Business Strategies, Global Strategies Group
- § Marina Caparini, Senior Fellow, Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces

## *Executive summary*

### *Security Sector Reform – What? Why? How? Who?*

Seldom has an SDA debate thrown up so many concerns, and delivered so few answers. With the focus on Security Sector Reform (SSR), it became apparent that no widely accepted definition existed. Furthermore, it was not clear who the customers were and, therefore not surprisingly, no strategic plan had been developed to guide its implementation. Finally, on the public-private side, there were many concerns raised about the involvement of private security companies (PSCs).

NATO's Susan Pond was the first to highlight the lack of coordination and this became one of the themes of the day. With so many actors involved (donors, international organisations, management consultants, risk consultants, NGOs, independent academics, freelance consultants, and private security companies) it was always going to be difficult to get everyone facing the same way. However, it was more complicated than that, as it became apparent that the Council and the Commission had only recently started seeing SSR in a similar light. Furthermore, the Commission's Inger Buxton wanted better inter-pillar coordination at the HQ and field levels.

In addition to the lack of coordinated activity, it was obvious that SSR could not be viewed in isolation. The EU Council's Col. Christophe Deherre argued that it was useless to reform the security sector unless attention was paid to the reasons for the underlying conflicts. That was true, but there was also the issue of the SSR's blurred boundaries. Buxton explained that official development assistance (ODA) money could now be used for SSR activities if certain conditions were met. That would possibly reduce the amount of money available for development aid. That sounded bad, but the Hague Centre for Strategic Studies' Christa Meindersma was not too concerned as she felt that SSR was a fundamental part of establishing the rule of law. Overall, there were very few positive statements. Many people stressed the need to have local ownership of any SSR solution. However, DCAF's Marina Caparini argued that in practice nothing but lip service was being paid to this important concept.

On the subject of PSCs, the companies themselves argued that they were employed because governments were too busy dealing with local issues. The Copenhagen Business School's Anna Leander, however, suggested that PSCs were employed to do the jobs that governments did not want to do. Caparini noted that the main states employing PSCs have generally failed to enforce legislation and hold individual employees responsible for serious crimes they may have committed abroad, contributing to the problem of impunity. It was left to the company representatives to stand up for themselves. Global Strategies Group's Sir Tom Duggin said they were independent and of high integrity, while Libra Advisory Group's Alex Martin and Control Risks Group's James Cameron both argued that PSCs always saw long-term solutions, unlike some other SSR players. Cameron did acknowledge however that PSCs were primarily involved for profit.

Overall, the most frequently heard phrase was *everyone wants coordination, but no one wants to be coordinated*. That was bad news as big issues were on the table. As the SDA's Giles Merritt concluded, if Europe can't get SSR right, then the ESDP is never going to happen.

## DEBATE HIGHLIGHTS

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

- Increase efforts to identify an accepted and shared definition for security sector reform.
- Guidelines identifying criteria of success should be developed to learn from past lessons and plan for future operations.
- Improve coordination and communication between donors, private companies, multinationals and international organisations in the context of SSR.
- Work should be done to make SSR more comprehensive; more training, greater integration of civil and military aspects, together with more involvement of the international community and better cooperation between donors.
- Increase discussion on the possibility of regulation for the private security sector.

### SESSION 1 HIGHLIGHTS

- Reorganising and reform a country or a region's security sector is of little value if no attention is paid to the underlying reasons of a conflict, such as unemployment, poverty and corruption, and the spoiling of natural resources.
- It is hard to evaluate the success of SSR processes as there are no guidelines as to when such processes should be evaluated (one, two or 10 years?) or against which benchmarks and criteria.
- There is need for an accepted and shared definition of SSR and the timing of SSR has to be agreed as this is linked to the end of a conflict, hence it is vital to determine the optimum time for intervention.
- Information sharing, in the context of SSR, is incredibly difficult but necessary and hindered by lack of coordination.

### SESSION 2 HIGHLIGHTS

- There is insufficient communication between donors and private sector companies because donors do not spend sufficient time in the country.
- Private Security Companies (PSCs) have evolved; the best PSCs can no longer be seen as private military operations but rather as risk management specialists or "enablers".
- Although PSCs are now widely used in various aspects of SSR and can play an important role, they continue to have lingering negative connotations among some groups and constituencies.
- There is no widely accepted definition of SSR and this poses a major challenge. There are both 'broad' and 'narrow' understandings of SSR but in post-conflict contexts it is unrealistic to talk about SSR in isolation, as this type of work is closely linked to issues such as DDR, transitional justice issues, the rule of law and de-mining activities.
- It appears to be a very Westernised view to say that SSR has to be based on democratisation. An unstable post-conflict government is unlikely to be able to offer fully-fledged democracy.
- In terms of regulating PSCs, the largest and most well established companies themselves support regulation as it helps legitimise the industry. On the other hand PSCs can be, and have been, employed to do jobs that governments did not wish to get involved in, and this political utility could also be a reason for the slow pace of regulation.

## *Session 1: How far does Security Sector Reform (SSR) still have to go?*

### BACKGROUND

In recent years, Europe's national government aid donor agencies, international organisations and NGOs have promoted the concept and practice of security sector reform (SSR) in post-conflict and post-authoritarian states. The debate looked at how successful these efforts had been, and what problems still needed to be addressed. Introducing the day, SDA Director Giles Merritt was hoping to hear that all parties were harmonised and heading in the same direction.

### THE FIRST SESSION SPEAKERS

SUSAN POND, Head of Partnership for Peace and Cooperation Programmes, Political Affairs and Security Policy, NATO, set the tone by arguing that although NATO's staff and nations wanted more coordination, no one in the SSR world wanted to be coordinated. Her message was that nations and organisations had to get to know more about each other. That was the only way forward as "coordination has not delivered results".



Susan Pond

Initially, Pond listed several (other) lessons learned:

- A holistic approach is required; there is no "one size fits all approach" and armed forces cannot provide all the answers
- Due to the number of different players, including ministries of finance and parliamentarians, SSR is a complex process and it is difficult to achieve complementarity between the various actors
- The principles of accountability and good governance are just as applicable to the role of ministries of defence as they are in any other sector of government

Pond therefore had several recommendations based on her NATO experience, particularly as the Alliance's Head of Partnership for Peace and Cooperation Programmes. She saw the need for:

1. A global overview of activities of all the players in the post-conflict arena; everyone has to get to know each other better<sup>1</sup>.
2. A common framework with exchange of best practices.
3. The development of a model organisation (or "dream team"), that could be sent, for example, to a country in the Balkans. This would be composed of a number of experts (working to a common methodology), from NGOs as well

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<sup>1</sup> Pond said that although NATO has no SSR policy, there was a partnership action plan on defence institution building, together with a number of DDR projects. Note: The UN Security Council considers disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of ex-combatants in a peacekeeping environment as part of its overall and continuing effort to contribute to enhancing the effectiveness of UN peacekeeping and peace-building activities in conflict situations around the world. (see <http://www.usunnewyork.usmission.gov/spst0010.htm>).

as governments, and its progress could be helped by a temporary exchange of personnel.

In conclusion, Pond said reform was an ongoing process and that the emphasis had to be firmly placed on change from within.

“Nations want to do more coordination but no one wants to be coordinated

Susan Pond

COL. CHRISTOPHE DEHERRE, Strategic Planner in the Civilian-Military Cell of the EU Military Staff, did not paint a totally optimistic picture as he felt that reorganising the security sector was of little value if no attention was paid to the underlying reasons of a conflict, such as unemployment, poverty and corruption, spoiling of natural resources, etc.

“Reforming the security sector is useless unless attention is paid to the reasons for the underlying conflicts

Christophe Deherre

Deherre was positive about the work done in bringing the Council and Commission closer together. Common SSR principles had been agreed and a new concept for support to DDR had been established. He was in agreement with Pond though, noting that it was hard to coordinate everybody.

Turning to the DRC<sup>2</sup>, Deherre argued that although EUSEC RD Congo had been quite

<sup>2</sup> The EUFOR RDC mission was the subject of an SDA evening debate on March 7, 2007. The meeting had concluded that it had been “a job well done” although “bureaucratic conflicts between the Council and the Commission, and between the European Institutions and the Member States” did exist. (see SDA report). EUSEC RD Congo is an on-going EU mission supporting Defence reform in the DRC since 2005.

successful up to now in regard to its mandate, that did not imply that SSR had been a triumph in the DRC. Noting that SSR had faced the same problems as everywhere, Deherre listed some of the many obstacles faced in the DRC, adding that there was also a lack of a more comprehensive and a more regional approach as well as the aforementioned need to look at the underlying problems.



Christophe Deherre

Deherre said that although various processes (SSR, DDR, educational activities, flanking measures) were often launched simultaneously, they were not going at the same speed. One reason given was that there was real opposition in some countries to the creation of the basic foundations for democracy. Furthermore, he contended that it was hard to evaluate the success of the SSR process as there were no guidelines as to when it should be evaluated (one, two or 10 years?) or against which benchmarks and

Obstacles faced in the DRC

- Insufficient understanding of SSR
- Inadequate funding
- Lack of a comprehensive approach
- Poor coordination of donors
- Not enough local ownership
- Lack of involvement of some authorities/local actors
- Misbehaviour / diverging interests

criteria.

Overall, Deherre wanted more progress; in making SSR more comprehensive, more training, greater integration of civil and military aspects, together with more involvement of the international community and better cooperation between donors.

INGER BUXTON, Policy Desk Officer, Unit Crisis Management and Conflict Prevention, European Commission, agreed with the other speakers that greater coordination was required and additionally stressed the importance of the conceptual SSR work that was vital if a common understanding of the subject was to be gained.



Inger Buxton

Buxton emphasised the EU's experience in enlargement, where SSR was seen as part of the stabilisation and association process. She wanted this internal experience to be utilised when the work expanded to Africa, the Middle East and the Caucuses as part of the EU's Neighbourhood Policy. Buxton also went further afield, as these activities were taking place in South East Asia, Latin America and Africa. This led her to talk about the need for "improved pillar coordination<sup>3</sup>" within the EU

<sup>3</sup> The EU takes decisions in three separate 'domains' (policy areas), also known as the three "pillars". The first pillar is the 'Community domain', covering most of the common policies, where decisions are taken by the Commission, Parliament and the Council. The second pillar is the common foreign and security policy, where decisions are taken by the Council alone. The third

(both at HQ and field level). For example, in the DRC, military and police reform was taking place in the 1<sup>st</sup> pillar while justice and peace reform was seen as part of the 2<sup>nd</sup> pillar.

“We have to recognise that violent conflicts must be addressed before we move on to development

Inger Buxton”

Concluding on the work of the OECD-DAC Network on Conflict, Peace and Development Co-operation (the CPDC)<sup>4</sup>, Buxton reminded the audience that it was the poorest countries that suffered the most in post-conflict situations. The CPDC was therefore looking at a total governance approach with the aim of integrating both the short-term and long-term aspects of the process. Stressing the need for local ownership, Buxton also mentioned the *OECD DAC Handbook on SSR: Supporting Security and Justice* that looked to close the gap between policy and practice<sup>5</sup>.

After hearing about the need for both conceptual and operational work in reforming the security sector, CHRISTA MEINDERSMA, Director for Conflict Management at The

pillar is 'police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters', where – once again – the Council takes the decisions. (see [http://europa.eu/abc/eurojargon/index\\_en.html](http://europa.eu/abc/eurojargon/index_en.html)).

<sup>4</sup> The CPDC (<http://www.oecd.org/dac/conflict>) is the international forum that brings together conflict prevention and peace-building experts from bilateral and multilateral development agencies, including UN system, Commission, IMF and World Bank. The aim is to define and develop common approaches in support of peace. The CPDC is a subsidiary group of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC).

<sup>5</sup> The handbook can be downloaded in PDF format at <http://www.oecd.org/dac/conflict/if-ssr>

Hague Centre for Strategic Studies, argued the need for a strategic concept that was geared to the practical reality of SSR in the field.



Christa Meindersma

Meindersma quoted from a UN Development Programme report about the lessons learnt from the Kosovo campaign<sup>6</sup>, saying that this could apply to many situations, such as East Timor etc. The quote stated, *“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.”*

For Meindersma, this conclusion (from the UNDP report) raised several questions, such as:

- Why was no plan developed in Kosovo?

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<sup>6</sup> “Preparing for a Security Sector Review: Lessons from Kosovo” by Jérôme Mellon (the full report is at [http://www.undp.org/bcpr/documents/jssr/ssr/Preparing\\_for\\_a\\_Security\\_Sector\\_Review\\_Lessons\\_from\\_Kosovo.pdf](http://www.undp.org/bcpr/documents/jssr/ssr/Preparing_for_a_Security_Sector_Review_Lessons_from_Kosovo.pdf)).

- If a similar situation existed tomorrow (in any of the conflict locations) would such a plan be developed? (Meindersma doubted that this was the case)
- In areas such as Kosovo, East Timor and Afghanistan, some conflicts exist due to SSR failures, so is it too late to re-evaluate and make a plan in order to change these situations positively?

“We need to develop a strategic concept for SSR that is geared to the practical realities in the field

Christa Meindersma”

Meindersma concluded her remarks by looking at lessons learnt from the various UN peacekeeping operations:

1. There is a need for an accepted definition of SSR. Meindersma said SSR was the regulation of the legitimate use of force by a state, and, as such, was deeply political and sensitive work. She added that if the approach was accepted, it could change the perceptions of donors, as it was not about creating more military capabilities.
2. The timing of SSR has to be agreed. Meindersma said this was linked to the end of a conflict, and it was vital to determine the optimum time for intervention.

## *The first session debate*

### NATO-EU INTEGRATION

The European Parliament’s Giovanna Bono, Administrator in the Subcommittee on Security and Defence, wanted more information on how NATO (ISAF<sup>7</sup>) would

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<sup>7</sup> The “International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) is a coalition of the NATO members and other contributing nations, deployed under the authorisation of the UNSC

work with the planned ESDP mission in Afghanistan.

Pond saw the need for a holistic programme. She stressed that Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) were under national leadership (NATO and non-NATO nations) in Afghanistan, but she was not aware how the PRTs would interface with the local police forces. However, Pond said discussions were ongoing in NATO in regard to how local and international actors could be better integrated.

### REASONS TO BE CHEERFUL AND THE EU IN KOSOVO

Bono also wanted to know why Deherre had been so negative about SSR, given that the EU was planning a major operation in Kosovo (one that involved more than 1500 policemen and judges). And how would that be linked to NATO's K4 mission?

Deherre argued that he was primarily negative about coordination, or rather about the lack of effective coordination. He reaffirmed that it was hard to get everyone on board with the same objectives. On Kosovo in particular, Deherre said the planned mission was police-related (transition of power from the military) and was not strictly part of SSR.

### SSR RE-BRANDING AND THE IMPACT ON DEVELOPMENT AID

Bono asked for further clarification on the way in which SSR was being rebranded by the Commission and if this meant that ESDP missions could now be funded in different ways. She added that the European Parliament's concern was that this might undermine aid development programmes.

Buxton argued that the developments in the SSR and DDR sectors showed a recognition that violent conflict was a major block on sustainable development and that it had to be addressed before genuine development (in poorer countries) could be achieved.

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supported by NATO. ISAF is financed by the Troop Contributing Nations (TCN).

Buxton also confirmed that the OECD-DAC had extended / clarified the definition of SSR so that it allowed activities on the civilian side (but not on the military side) and that official development assistance (ODA) money could be used for SSR activities. However, the European Development Fund<sup>8</sup> could support non-ODA initiatives, such as the African Peace Facility and the Integrated Brigade in the DRC.

While regarding the debate around the use of ODA and non-ODA money as healthy, Buxton insisted that the emphasis had to be on poverty reduction and local ownership. In this respect, she argued that the Commission was in line with Member States, the World Bank and the UN System<sup>9</sup>, as all these organisations had agreed common definitions as to how development money could be used for SSR purposes. Buxton acknowledged that some countries wanted to extend the definition further to allow ODA money to be used for defence reforms but she felt this was unlikely.



*Session / debate*

Meindersma did not share Bono's concern about development money being spent on SSR activities. For Meindersma, the problem was

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<sup>8</sup> The European Development Fund (EDF) is the main instrument for providing Community aid for development cooperation in the African, Caribbean and Pacific States (ACP States) and the overseas countries and territories (OCTs). (see <http://europa.eu/scadplus/leg/en/lvb/r12102.htm>).

<sup>9</sup> The UN System is a blanket term that includes: the UN General Assembly, the UN Security Council, The UN Economic & Social Council, the UN Secretariat and the International Court of Justice.

that SSR was being seen as a short-term exit type of activity and not as encompassing actions that were central to long-term development. As an example, she felt that SSR was a fundamental part of establishing the rule of law.

The Global Strategies Group's Sir Thomas Duggin, Director of New Business Strategies, agreed that these comments were in line with UK policy regarding the use of aid for development. He said the UK government looked at three things:

1. good governance had to be in place to ensure money was not wasted
2. the stability of a recipient country was necessary for development assistance to be effective
3. human rights of a country had to reach a certain level

#### INFORMATION SHARING AND LEADERSHIP

Cranfield University Center for Security Sector Management's Stephanie Blair commented on the need for better networking, Blair suggested that training programmes be used so that networks of individuals could be developed in that way?



*Stephanie Blair*

Merritt took this further as he wanted to know why the different groups could not share information effectively. He had also picked up on the need for a strategic concept and for a shared definition of SSR. Merritt wanted to know who should take the lead.

Pond felt that progress was being made as NATO was opening up its training courses to non-NATO staff, international organisations and NGOs. Regarding information sharing, she said that this worked "on the ground" but that at HQs, it was hard to define a common framework.

Deheere felt that the problem was the nature of SSR as it was a politically sensitive topic. As such, classified information could not be shared with all. This was especially true for the EU and NATO, where views differed even within a single Member State. Deheere could not say who should take the lead in SSR matters.

Buxton agreed with Pond that everybody wanted to coordinate but no one wanted to be coordinated. As for who should take the lead, there had to be local ownership. So there was no need for lead management, but national ownership with different degrees of support. Buxton felt there was a good understanding of what SSR was within the international community, but that more dialogue was needed within the recipient countries.

Meindersma said information sharing was "incredibly difficult", as coordination was not happening. But that was also true within a single ministry, so for her it was a problem but it was not a technical one. Regarding definitions, Meindersma said the need for a common definition of SSR was vital. She felt that the UN was taking a lead role, but that there had to be more focus on the roles and responsibilities of other actors. Meindersma again stressed the need for an overall strategic concept but she emphasised that each situation needed a separate strategic concept that was particular to the country in question.

#### EU AND NATO IN KOSOVO

Defense News's Brooks Tigner wanted to know about the responsibilities within the next Kosovo mission. Would NATO and EU be cooperating behind the scenes on SSR? Pond said her team was engaged on defence reform in Kosovo, but the details were still under discussion. She saw no problems in NATO and the EU staff working together. Deheere agreed, saying there were no problems in the field.

#### IN CONCLUSION

Merritt concluded by saying that it was fundamental to get SSR working well if the ESDP was to be effective. But he noted that the situation was different in each country, as some previous recipients were now EU

**SECURITY SECTOR REFORM: PUBLIC-PRIVATE PRIORITIES**  
**SDA-DCAF ROUNDTABLE REPORT**

Member States while others were rogue states. Merritt saw the ball as being very much in the EU's court – it needed to get everyone in step in order to avoid bureaucracy and

inter-institutional rivalry. The enemy was chaos and there was no need for secrecy and any blockage in terms of information sharing.



*Session I Panel*

## Session 2: Where do private security companies (PSCs) fit into SSR?

### INTRODUCTION

In his moderator role, ALAN BRYDEN, Deputy Head of Research, Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF)<sup>10</sup>, explained the organisation's role and objectives. This was to provide policy advice and tools, and also operational SSR activities, with a particular emphasis on the promotion of democratic governance of the security sector.



Alan Bryden

“Part of the problem is that no one agrees on the definition of SSR”

Alex Bryden

Bryden stressed the need for agreement on the key principles of SSR in order to ensure “elusive policy coherence”. He added that SSR had to shake off its Anglo-Saxon roots and that for this to happen it would be useful to have the SSR concept and its application developed within a UN framework. The recent Open Debate on SSR in the UN

<sup>10</sup> [www.dcaf.ch](http://www.dcaf.ch)

Security Council was a very positive development.<sup>11</sup> Agreeing that there was a need to look at the various definitions of SSR, Bryden noted it was a “very young” sector and that this session provides an important opportunity to better understand the range of public and private actors with a role to play in this field. He emphasised the need for transparency, accountability and local ownership of reform processes as underpinning principles for policy and programming – the keys to legitimacy and sustainability.

### THE SECOND SESSION SPEAKERS

ALEX MARTIN, Director, Libra Advisory Group, saw two reasons why the private sector was playing a significant role in the implementation of SSR. Firstly (and most importantly), governments were too busy with local issues; secondly, private sector companies could react more rapidly in putting together a team with the necessary skills, as they could offer more incentives.

“PSCs play a significant role in SSR because donor government security agencies are too busy looking after their own national issues”

Alex Martin

Martin commented that the vast majority of UK SSR projects were implemented by the private sector. However his definition was a broad one, as it included not only private companies but also NGOs and academic professors acting in an advisory role. Martin later defended this definition, as all private individuals, including academics that might offer legal advice, were all working for money.

One of Martin's conclusions was that there was insufficient communication between donors and the private sector companies, as the former did not spend sufficient time in the country. He wanted more flexibility in the

<sup>11</sup> *Security Council 5632nd meeting, 'The Maintenance of International Peace and Security: The Role of the Security Council in Supporting Security Sector Reform'*; S/PV.5632 20 February 2007.

award of contracts as many public tendering processes had been design with the purchasing of photocopiers in mind. In these conditions, there was no possibility of reform being conducted with a sufficient element of long-time planning and strategy development.



Alex Martin

Martin argued that lessons were learnt on the ground. However, staff had no incentive to retain the SSR knowledge with the current systems in place. He wanted consultants to be given a reason to retain knowledge and Martin added that it was also important to retain contact with the multinationals, i.e. Shell, RTZ. They were the key players in some regions of the world and should be encouraged to be involved in regional SSR.

ANNA LEANDER, Associate Professor, Department of Intercultural Communication and Management, Copenhagen Business School, had a major concern about the influence of private sector companies in the SSR area. She explained this via three points:

1. Market competition: like other companies, private security operators wanted to increase market share so they found it natural to try to shape the understanding of the problem and therefore shape the actual priorities in the SSR area
2. The risks: with the increasing influence of private security companies (PSCs), Leander felt there was a risk of having skewed priorities. She also felt that there was a real lack of transparency, as for

example only 50% of US contracts were open to competition. Finally, there was a conservative bias towards companies that had already worked in a particular area, they were sometimes thought to be locked-in as it would be too expensive to change contractors.

3. Conclusion. Leander reasoned that there was a real need to examine who was setting the priorities, as the development of an effective SSR market meant there was a need for effective priority setting.

“PSCs are competing for market share and are therefore trying to influence the SSR sector priorities

Anna Leander”



Anna Leander

Control Risks Group (CRG) Head of Governance and Development JAMES CAMERON described his company as an international risk consultancy that helped both international companies and (client) countries to cope with risks so that business could take place in a normal manner.

Cameron said CRG complied with OECD-DAC type guidelines and that the company wanted more formalised control of the private sector so that its reputation could be further

protected. However, although he called for control of the sector, this had to be control of an appropriate nature. Cameron insisted that companies such as his were in the business for several reasons but must make a profit. There are companies that would prefer to avoid regulation and control if it were to pose a threat to this objective.

“The reason why PSCs are in the SSR sector is to make a profit but they can make a valuable contribution nonetheless

James Cameron”

Using East Timor as an example, Cameron argued that the private sector operations would work with a country and define what was needed in the long-term. Unlike government donors, who often lost interest once political objectives were achieved, he said PSCs would stay on the job and ensure that it was completed.



James Cameron

Cameron agreed that the *legitimate use of force and the creation of a monopoly of state use of that force* should be included in any definition of SSR. However, he felt that private sector operators were often left out at the planning stage of SSR as countries were still nervous about their involvement. That meant that such private companies had to work with a poor definition of requirements, following bad decisions. Cameron wanted the SSR dialogue to start at the very beginning of a conflict, and that the private sector should be

involved in all discussions so that any decisions were agreed by all parties.

CRG Case Study – East Timor (Cameron)

- International intervention completed too soon
- Poor scoping of SSR requirements
- SSR efforts imbalanced
- The result was a fragile security sector
- Govt of East Timor want independent private assessment of current situation – Control Risks are consultancy of choice.
- Long-term local solutions will be provided if funding found.

SIR THOMAS DUGGIN, Director of New Business Strategies, Global Strategies Group, opened his remarks by focusing on the conditionality that many governments now placed on development aid. Sir Thomas said that stability, human rights and good governance were often seen as pre-conditions for aid. However, he dismissed the idea that this was a new phenomena as the UK government had been involved in such activities (e.g. institution building, training of military staff, etc.) since the colonial days.



Sir Thomas Duggin

Noting that PSCs were constantly evolving, Sir Thomas said this was due to the need for countries to guard against political developments and social issues. He argued that many countries were now embarking on a search for common international values. In

turn, PSCs had evolved, as the best ones could no longer be seen as private military operations but rather as risk management specialists or “enablers”. Sir Thomas saw their objective as enabling NGOs and other bodies in the private sector to do their work in (often) dangerous areas, where the UN and other international organisations did not want to go.

Global Strategy Group – examples (Duggin)

- Training of customs staff in Mozambique
- Demining activities in Vietnam
- Training military staff in Liberia
- Responsible for security at Iraq’s international airport (Baghdad)
- Election monitoring in Afghanistan

Agreeing that there was no accepted definition of SSR, Sir Thomas reasoned that it covered many issues, including DDR, the development of the rule of law, police training, demining activities, teaching people to be aware of mines, training of prison officers, etc. His conclusion was similar to that of earlier speakers, that people turned to the private sector due to a lack of capacity at government level. Sir Thomas added that PSCs were independent and showed a high level of integrity, otherwise they could not remain in business.

“No definition of SSR exists but the scope is widening”  
Sir Tom Duggin

MARINA CAPARINI, Senior Fellow, Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, looked at the crowded SSR policy domain and examined the mix of actors and types of services that they are providing. She divided these services into three types:

1. Training: of all types, from police and military training to human rights and democratic and civilian oversight;
2. Management support: including project management, budgeting skills etc.
3. Policy support: providing assessments of the security sector (or one particular aspect of it), advice on developing national security doctrine or policy review.

While acknowledging that PSCs are now widely used in various aspects of SSR and can play an important role, she noted that they continue to have lingering negative connotations among some groups and constituencies. Specific concerns that have been raised about PSCs and private contractors in SSR have included the quality of personnel employed, such as in police training, and the lack of local ownership in developing and implementing SSR. The latter was seen as not just a “contractor” problem, but also one that was linked to donors. She also highlighted the lack of accountability and impunity, especially with regard to firms that provided armed protection services. Again, she said this was often the fault of governmental donors who did not hold private contractors accountable for serious crimes and abuses, even where existing legislation could be used to prosecute offences.



Marina Caparini

Caparini also had other concerns about contractor involvement in SSR programmes:

- Conflict of interest: there are potential conflicts of interest if, for example, a firm that produces weapons also offers consultancy services in the areas of defence modernisation;
- Accountability: donor-supported SSR should involve accountability to two principals: the donor and the local state or government. However, it is often the case that accountability to the donor predominates;
- Local ownership: “lip service” is often paid to this concept with inadequate attention being paid to local preferences and perceptions, both by donors and PSCs.

“There is a lot of lip service being paid by donors to the concept of local ownership

Marina Caparini”

This led Caparini to make several recommendations for donors and reforming states planning to use (or using) PSCs in their SSR programmes:

1. Practice due diligence in hiring contractors (perform the background research to ensure that the company has the credentials and capacity to perform its contracted functions);
  2. Ensure the contractors’ mandate is carefully and clearly defined;
  3. Verify that the reform methodology is appropriate and adequate, and if possible set out in the contract;
  4. Make certain that the reform programme is carefully coordinated and overseen, especially where several tiers of contractors may be involved;
  5. Make sure that existing and applicable SSR guidelines are followed by security companies;
6. Ensure that local ownership is enshrined in the work plan and is operationalised in practice; and
  7. Create clear performance indicators in order to measure whether the reforms have been successful

In conclusion, Caparini said that many specialist skills were needed in SSR and that private security companies could provide a number of them. However, she called for more attention to be paid to the way in which private contractors are managed, with a particular need to hold contractors accountable when laws have been broken, and for more transparency and oversight by donor states and organisations regarding their contracted SSR services. Some donors have also failed to take into account the views and preferences of local states and societies in SSR programme development, including the roles to be played by PSCs and private contractors. Caparini wanted better dialogue and transparency between all parties, and more effort by donors to live up to their commitment to local ownership of SSR.

#### Participants in the SSR sector (Caparini)

- Multilateral and bi-lateral donors
- International organisations
- Management consultants
- Risk consulting firms
- NGOs
- Independent academics and freelance consultants
- Private military and security companies

### *The second session debate*

#### IN SEARCH OF TRANSPARENCY

Tigner objected to Martin’s suggestion that public tendering authorities could learn from the private security sector’s more flexible way of earning contracts, as it was paramount that authorities were held accountable when the public’s money was being spent. Tigner saw the need for totally transparent operations when it came to SSR-type contracts being put out to tender.



*Session II Debate*

Martin also favoured transparency but he explained that donors should be more comfortable with intangible outcomes, instead of insisting on measurable outputs such as the number of people to be trained in a certain time period. He argued that it was often hard to define measurable results, especially in cases where actions might lead to improvements over a period of, say, 10-15 years.

Also on the issue of transparency, Bono found the current situation extremely confusing as she had no idea how much the European Parliament was providing to the OECD in the various SSR sectors.

Bryden acknowledged that there were both 'broad' and 'narrow' understandings of SSR but emphasised that in post-conflict contexts it was simply unrealistic to talk about SSR in isolation, as this work was closely linked to issues such as DDR, transitional justice issues, the rule of law, demining activities, etc.

### IS THERE A SINGLE DEFINITION OF SSR?

Given the link between the ESDP and SSR, Bono asked Bryden for clarification on the accepted definition of SSR. She saw the "narrow definition" as one that encompassed peacebuilding, disarmament, demining, reintegration of the armed forces, building up the police force, training police and military, managing prisons, etc. Despite seeing this as a "huge list", Bono said some people were arguing for the expansion of this list to include aspects of development aid and assistance to civil society. She wanted to know where SSR started and where it stopped.



*Bryden fields questions from the audience*

Bryden stated that there was no widely accepted definition of SSR and that this was a major challenge. Different interpretations existed and this was even true within multilateral organisations such as the UN and is evident in its policy and operations. On the positive side, Bryden argued that donors of all kinds were converging in their understanding of SSR in policy terms and that the work of the OECD DAC has been very helpful in this respect. The requirement is to build on this in ensuring more coherent approaches to SSR implementation.

Bryden added that DCAF was in favour of the OECD-DAC's definition of SSR because it is set within a framework of democratic governance of the security sector. Such an approach prioritises the human security of individuals and communities and underlines that enhancing the performance of security providers must be set in the context of strengthening national capacities to manage reform processes and ensure democratic control and oversight of the security sector by e.g. parliaments or civil society actors.

Bryden added that DCAF was in favour of the OECD-DAC's definition of SSR that was based on the introduction of democratic governance. So, for example, the introduction of more effective armed security forces was acceptable if it was done in the framework of democratic governance.

### EAST TIMOR

Following Cameron's remarks, the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia to Belgium's Julang Pujianto wanted clarification on what PSCs did in East Timor and whether the local authorities were involved.

Cameron said there were many reasons (historical, geo-political, etc.) why East Timor had suffered problems. However, the current situation was that the government wanted an assessment of the overall situation and an independent statement on where things had gone wrong. He added that donors were not particularly keen to pay for this work as they would not have total control of the outcome.

Martin added a voice of experience, saying that many NGOs and other international organisations had moved in to East Timor – as it had been the “flavour of the month” – but they had not stayed for the long-term. After a relatively short period, they had moved on to the next crisis.

### DEMOCRACY – A FRAGILE FLOWER

The Mission of Azerbaijan to NATO’s Javanshir Mammadov turned to the suggestion that democratic governance was a pre-condition for companies to be allowed to work in the security reform sector. Mammadov argued that it was very difficult for countries in transition to have sufficient stability even if a government had been elected democratically. He said that the conditions were widely different in places like Iraq, Kosovo and Afghanistan, and that it was not practical to work with a single concept. These governments still needed to fight terrorism and they needed training and support. Given the lack of stability, and perhaps this explained why some countries preferred to work with bilateral agreements with private companies as they offered a more practical approach than the theoretical one provided by international organisations.

Martin felt that Mammadov’s comments went to the heart of the problem as it appeared to be a very Westernised view to say that SSR had to be based on democratisation. He said that Mammadov was right to say that an unstable post-conflict government was unlikely to be able to offer fully-fledged democracy.

As for the definition of SSR, Martin was concerned about the OECD’s support for one that depended on a framework of democratic governance and state-controlled power. As an example, the situation in Afghanistan could

not be resolved without working with all parties, including the warlords.

### REGULATION – WANTED OR NEEDED, BOTH OR NEITHER?

A member of the European Parliament’s Policy Committee wanted to hear more about regulation. Had the PSCs developed their thinking in this area and were they planning to look for regulation at the EU level? Caparini felt there had been recent advances in the US in terms of the regulation of the private security sector but she had seen no movement in Europe. While experts frequently suggest that a regional approach might be an effective means of regulating PSCs that operate transnationally in conflict zones and high risk areas, such regulation was apparently not yet on the EU’s agenda.

Sir Thomas Duggin said that the British Association of Private Security Companies (BAPSC) had been created in the UK. However as far as he knew, this had not been expanded into mainland Europe.

Caparini returned to the fray, adding that while some countries such as France already had fairly restrictive legislation governing PSCs, this did not necessarily preclude the existence of such companies. She added that the largest and most well-established private security companies themselves supported regulation, as it would help to legitimise the industry. Caparini suggested that private security companies could be, and have been, employed to do jobs that governments did not wish to get involved in, and this political utility could also be a reason for the slow pace of regulation.



*Session II participants*

The Belgian Ministry of Defence’s Jacques Rosiers was of the opinion that one problem was that some private companies were

**SECURITY SECTOR REFORM: PUBLIC-PRIVATE PRIORITIES**  
**SDA-DCAF ROUNDTABLE REPORT**

involved in aiding non-state actors, and that this might cause some countries to avoid going down the regulatory path.

Sir Thomas had the final word, saying that PSCs wanted regulation in order to sort out the bad apples from the good ones. He

insisted that PSCs were not private armies, but he did add that it was sometimes necessary to offer protection to people in failed states and in areas that were not in a post-conflict situation, as that was the only way of ensuring that business could continue.

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**SECURITY SECTOR REFORM: PUBLIC-PRIVATE PRIORITIES**  
**SDA-DCAF ROUNDTABLE REPORT**

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**SDA-DCAF ROUNDTABLE REPORT**

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